urday Special / A2-1
Fans pay tribute to Nora Aunor in new book

■ Business / B1
2nd Quarter trade outlook not too rosy, says BSP

■ World / A12
Judge bars Larry King from testifying for Michael Jackson

■ News / A2
New DOH chief hints he may abort 'Ligtas Buntis'

■ Science / B4-1
92% of Filipinos prone to heart, vascular disease

Big Mike makes hasty retreat to Singapore

By Nikko Dizon

THE BELEAGUERED husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo left yesterday morning for Singapore, deftly eluding members of the media waiting for him at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1 in Pasay City.

Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo requested early

BIG MIKE/ A21

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Public airs anger over VIP security escorts, sirens

By Armand N. Nocum

THE MOTORING public has had enough.

Yesterday, irate listeners bombarded a dzBB radio program with complaints against the wanton use by top government officials of blinkers, sirens and security escorts to weave their way through traffic in the metropolis.

PUBLIC/ A22

Nene: GMA benefited

'But I have no proof linking her to jueteng'

By Michael Lim Ubac and Juliet Labog-Javellana

SENATE Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday said that while he had no hard evidence to implicate President Macapagal-Arroyo in "jueteng," he could only presume that she "benefited" from operations of the illegal numbers game.

Pimentel, who, along with Senate President Franklin Drilon, had sought a Senate inquiry into allegations that members of the First Family had been receiving protection money, was responding to the question of why he thought Ms Arroyo had not directly ordered provincial police commanders or governors to stop jueteng operations in their areas.

"I can only surmise that she benefited from jueteng," he said.

But in an ambush interview after the Rembrandt news forum in Quezon City, Pimentel said: "For the present, I have nothing. But for the past, it was a matter of public knowledge that the propaganda materials for Gloria in her campaign for the vice presidency, especially that poster that pictured her in a seductive pose like Nora Aunor, was reportedly paid for by Bong Pineda."

He said that since Pineda was "notoriously known by people as a jueteng lord, you [will] somehow [wonder], if those posters

NENE/ A21

JOAN BONDOC

TAX 101 FOR ENTERTAINERS
In an unprecedented move, the Bureau of Internal Revenue meets on Friday with entertainment personalities like actresses Sunshine Cruz (left) and Judy Ann Santos at the BIR office in Quezon City to inform and remind them of their tax obligations to the country. The meeting comes following a series of high-profile tax evasion charges filed against TV and movie stars. (Right) BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno himself leads the resource persons at the star-studded assembly. *(Story on Page A4.)*

Exposé part of destabilization plot, say Gloria's men

By Christine O. Avendaño and Armand N. Nocum

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's men are crying destabilization.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday told reporters in a phone patch interview that the latest controversy involving members of the First Family could be part of a destabilization plot against the administration.

Ermita said it was such allegations as the President's husband and their elder son receiving "jueteng" protection money that could fuel the anger of the public.

"It may be part of what I call body punches to weaken the administration or the credibility of its leaders," he said in Filipino.

Ermita recalled that two weeks ago, he raised the suspicion that allegations being thrown at the administration were "part of an effort to weaken [it]."

It was around that time that a police official told the INQUIRER three prominent persons—two of whom were code-named M1 and M2—were receiving millions of pesos in jueteng payola. Speculation swirled that M1 and M2 referred to First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo and his son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez expressed a similar opinion in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

He said the resurgence of the issue that toppled the Estrada administration could be "part of a plot to destabilize" the Arroyo administration."

"We must look into this angle," said Gonzalez, who, along with the Office of the Ombudsman, had been ordered by Ms Arroyo to "look thoroughly" into the allegations against her husband and son.

"This is something that can inflame the emotions of the people," Gonzalez said. "People may now be saying: 'The government does nothing but take jueteng money. Before it was the Estrada administration; now it is this administration."

Gonzalez, however, said the situation was different now in

EXPOSÉ/ A21

US makes 4 RP seamen rich as environment heroes

RUDY ESPERAS

INSTANT MILLIONAIRES. Four seamen receive a total of $250,000 from the US Embassy for alerting the US Coast Guard that their ship was dumping oil waste into the Pacific. The awardees, from left, Jonathan Sanchez, Jimmy Piamonte, Richard Santillan and Florencio Tolentino flank Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli.

By Nikko Dizon

THE UNITED States not only heaped praises on them for their heroic deed. It also turned them into millionaires.

But the four Filipino seamen—instrumental in the conviction of violators of international and US environmental laws—chose to make only a brief appearance before the media at the US Embassy yesterday.

They disappeared as soon as the press conference was over.

Jonathan Sanchez, Jimmy Piamonte and Florencio Tolentino each received $75,000 (or an estimated P4 million) while Richard Santillan got $25,000 (P1.35 million) from the US Justice Department.

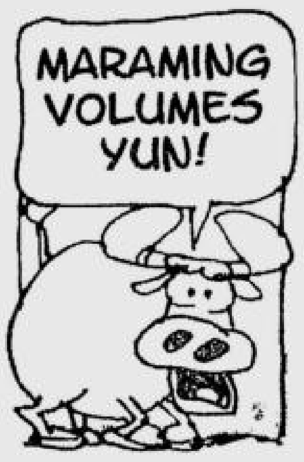
The reward was for their initiative in informing the US Coast Guard that their vessel, MV Katerina, had violated international and US environmental laws.

US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli handed them large "mock" checks in a brief ceremony at the embassy's Charles Parsons Ballroom. The embassy did not say when the real money was given to them.

Two of the seamen came with their wives.

"I know this is an inspiring story. But they are private citizens and they said they do not wish to be interviewed

US MAKES/ A22



MARAMING VOLUMES YUN!

Want to catch a fugitive? Check the Yellow Pages

By TJ Burgonio

AS THEY say in the Yellow Pages, let your fingers do the walking. That's how an administration senator wants to solve the country's worsening crime situation.

Sen. Ralph Recto yesterday proposed that the government create a "yellow pages" type of directory of wanted felons in the country so civilians could help the authorities track them down.

Recto pointed out that people would tend to be more vigilant and pro-active in the

WANT/ A8

Gov't docs declare Ramos sister unfit for trial

By Armand N. Nocum

ESTHER Ramos-Balley, eldest sister of a Filipino diplomat slain in her bedroom by robbers, is not mentally fit to stand the rigors of a trial, government doctors declared yesterday.

Still, state prosecutors said the medical findings did not mean they were going to drop their investigation into allegations that Balley ordered the break-in at the Ramoses' house, which led to the killing of her sister, Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Alicia Ramos.

"The findings do not say anything as to whether she can order such things as alleged by [suspect Robert Lumagui]," Department of Justice State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco said in a press briefing yesterday.

"We'll wait for the period of remission during which time, she might be able to answer questions regarding her alleged involvement," he said.

Reporters were shown a copy of a joint medical report on Balley submitted to the DOJ by the National Bureau of Investigation and the National Center for Mental Health.

The medical report, which spelled the name of the eldest sister, differently stated: "Based on the foregoing history, behavioral observation, and mental status examination done, the subject, Ester Bailey y Ramos was found to be suffering from bipolar disorder 1, current episode, manic."

"At present, she is in a state of acute exacerbation of symptoms, therefore, she is deemed not fit to stand the rigors of court trial," added the report signed by Dr. Rommel Papa of the NBI and Dr. Noel Reyes of the NCMH.

The two doctors said Balley's disorder "is characterized by an elevated and expansive mood.

GOV'T/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Palawan. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY: ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/05/21/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Second FrontPage

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

DOH chief may abort 'Ligtas Buntis'

By Christian V. Esguerra

CRITICS of the government's controversial Ligtas Buntis program can heave a sigh of relief, at least for now.

"We need to review it first before deciding if we [will] continue it," Incoming Health Secretary Francisco Duque III told the INQUIRER. "We'll see the areas where it was successful and the lessons that were learned."

The fate of the population control program will be known after "wide-ranging" consultations have been held with legislators, Roman Catholic Church leaders and Department of Health employees, Duque said.

The Catholic Church has criticized Ligtas Buntis as intended to primarily promote artificial family planning in support of the government's birth control effort.

Duque's predecessor, Manuel Dayrit, aggressively promoted Ligtas Buntis, divorcing it from the population control issue.

Feeling the heat

Dayrit, a devout Catholic, has said he personally favors natural family planning to curb the country's 2.3 percent annual birth rate.

Scheduled to assume his new post on June 1, Duque yesterday had a foretaste of what may be in store for him when he faces the powerful Commission on Appointments for confirmation.

In a media forum, Senate Minority Floor Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, a member of the commission, questioned the incoming health chief on the alleged misuse of health care benefits intended for overseas Filipino workers.

With Duque seated to his right, Pimentel told reporters: "I want to know what happened to the Owwa (Overseas Workers Welfare Administration) funds given to PhilHealth during the campaign."

Pimentel was referring to allegations that a P530-million budget transferred to the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. might have been used to promote the candidacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo in last year's elections.

On top of shelving Ligtas Buntis, Duque said he would implement key reforms in the existing health reform plan.

Part of these reforms is the expansion of the government's health card program to cover more Filipinos.

Dream

At present, there are 69.5 million Filipinos covered by the Philippine Health Insurance Corp., a government-owned and -controlled corporation which Duque heads.

"My dream is to see every Filipino with a PhilHealth card," he said.

Also on his priority list is the training of local health managers in cities and municipalities.

Duque said many of them were "not prepared to absorb" the changes brought by reforms in the DOH bureaucracy a few years ago.

Local governments are now in charge of implementing DOH programs and policies in the field.

Duque also wants to strengthen the regulatory power of the Bureau of Food and Drugs, especially amid a massive influx of so-called health supplements in the local market, many of which, he said, had no BFAD approval.

A trust fund

Duque came under fire from opposition quarters for allegedly using part of the money for PhilHealth cards bearing Ms Arroyo's picture as a campaign ploy.

Pimentel said the amount belonged to a trust fund.

"As such, it cannot be used for any other purpose other than for what was intended," Pimentel said.

Funds are safe

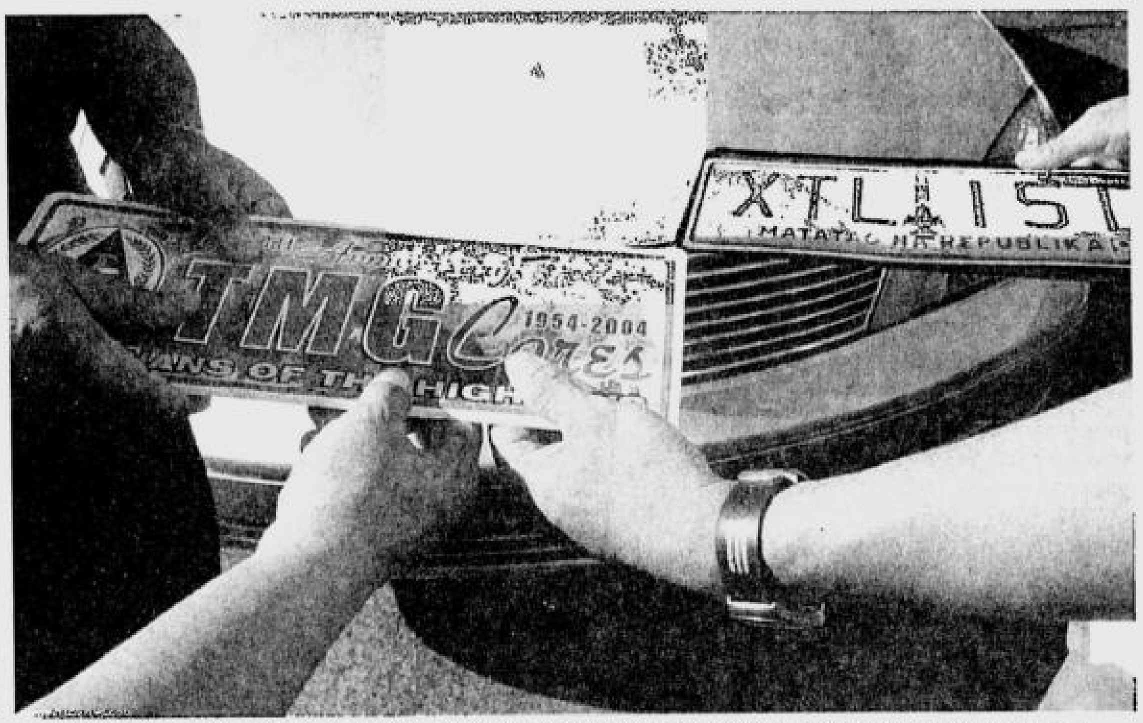
Duque said the amount could not have been used in the elections because it was transferred to PhilHealth only on March 1 this year.

"We have been exercising prudence in the management of the Owwa-Medicare funds, as what we also do with the rest of the health insurance funds contributed by our members," he said.

He said the amount was safely placed in government securities, such as special savings deposits and treasury bills.

Marcos cited complaints that OFWs were not benefiting from PhilHealth.

But Duque explained that the government company actually pays for the hospitalization of OFW members as long as they submit the needed documents.



COMMEMORATIVE car plates are out—for now—on Edsa as lawmen strictly enforce no plates, no travel policy along Metro Manila's main thoroughfare.

JOAN BONDOC

Mayor's son driving without license, expired plates

By Luige A. del Puerto

IT PAYS to be the son of a mayor.

Traffic police yesterday stopped a car being driven by a son of an Ilocos Sur mayor in Quezon City as part of a crackdown on cars without license plates.

The son had no driver's license, a major violation of traffic rules, and the car's commemorative plate with the mark "Mayor" had long expired, police said.

But surprisingly, no record of the incident could be found. Neither the cop who accosted him nor the cop who processed the release of impounded vehicles could say what happened to him or to his car.

The son, said to be in his 20s, was driving along Aurora Boulevard in Quezon City when traffic management officers flagged down his vehicle. The woman with him had a driver's license, but she was not the driver.

"His commemorative plate was expired, he was driving without license, and he did not have an OR-CR (official receipt-certificate of registration)," said the officer who accosted him.

"But I can't remember his name," he said, mumbling words that in effect said he also did not know what happened to the car.

The cop processing the papers of impounded vehicles in Camp Crame said he had no record of the incident.

"I think I saw the commemorative plate, but I have no record of it here.

It was not turned over to me. What I have is the commemorative plate (bearing the mark) 'media,'" the young cop said after checking a list of cars who were flagged down and brought to Camp Crame.

"Every incident should have been recorded here, but that was not turned over to me," he said.

Driving without license is a major traffic offense, punishable by jail or fine or both, the police said.

"He will be charged accordingly," Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes told reporters in a press briefing.

The question is, will Reyes still find him? Reyes announced that the police have so far seized 407 cars nationwide during the last three days of the campaign.

Yesterday alone, the police "impounded 61 vehicles," 34 of them motorcycles.

Reyes said going after motorcycles without plates is crucial to the police's anticrime efforts.

"A lot of times, these motorcycles are being used in committing murder," he said, adding in crimes where getaway vehicles are used, 95 percent of them used cars or motorcycles without plates.

"This is in response to the call of our President for an intensified campaign against criminality in our streets and to assure (residents) of a safer community," he said.

The Interior Secretary also presented to the media some 110 suspects in robbery, car theft, and drug cases who were arrested in the last three days.

"We are pleased to announce that our police force nationwide is involved in this campaign," Reyes said. *With Dano Tingcungco, trainee*

Captain leads Navy awardees

A NAVY captain who led his men into turning the tide of battle against over 400 Muslim rebels in Patikul, Sulu, in October 2002 headed the awardees at an austere anniversary celebration of the Philippine Navy yesterday.

Marine Capt. Dennis Fernandez received the Distinguished Conduct Star for leading the 33rd Marine Company in a battle with Abu Sayyaf and Moro National Liberation Front insurgents. He was also cited for reinforcing the 3rd Marine Company which had come under heavy rebel fire.

"Unmindful of his personal safety, he decisively maneuvered a platoon and the company headquarters which applied suppressive fire on the enemy's right flank. Meanwhile, he led another platoon risking his life to reinforce the 3rd Marine Company," a Navy statement said.

Among the other awardees were Capt. Ramon Espera Jr., Distinguished Service Star with Second Bronze Anahaw Leaf; and Maj. Ruben Candelario and Sgt. Alvin Pabelonia, both Gold Cross Medal awardees.

For the first time, the Navy did away with all the pomp and ceremony of past celebrations as it marked its 107th anniversary.

Capt. Geronimo Malabanan, Navy spokesperson, said past celebrations cost them at least P8 million.

But this year, upon the orders of Navy flag officer in command, Vice Adm. Ernesto de Leon, the anniversary focused on the awards.

Instead of staging parades, De Leon decided to have the Navy personnel in Manila and Cavite help clean up the Pasig River from May 20 to 22.

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Leniency ruled out for Oakwood mutiny leaders

184 enlisted men released

By Dona Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo was not inclined to show "leniency" to the junior officers who led the failed July 27, 2003 Oakwood mutiny, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. said yesterday.

Cruz said the 96 "Magdalo" junior officers would have to undergo a full-blown trial before military and civilian courts.

"The President's instructions were to continue the trial of the officers. Her instructions have not changed," Cruz told reporters during the 107th anniversary rites of the Philippine Navy at Camp Aguinaldo.

The government has filed a separate charge of coup d'etat against the junior officers, most of them with the rank of captain, with a civilian court. Convicted coup leaders could face 40 years in prison.

Although the core leaders have already apologized to their commander in chief, Cruz said the President's promise of leniency applies only to the enlisted personnel.

2 years in jail

Yesterday, 184 enlisted personnel who joined the mutiny were released after nearly two years of detention as part of a plea bargain with military prosecutors.

"There was leniency for the enlisted personnel, that's why there was a plea bargain. So for the officers, it's better to let the court system and the court-martial system to try them and let their trial continue... They will make a decision based on the evidence. "That's the instruction of the President," Cruz insisted.

Except for the core coup leaders , the rest of the junior officers have also sought a plea bargain.

The core leaders and the rest of the junior officers are being tried separately by a court-martial.

The 67 junior officers were charged with violation of Article of War 63 (disrespect to the President); Article 64 (disrespect to superior officer); Article 96 (conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman); and Article 67 (mutiny).

Retraining

The 29 core leaders, on the other hand, were only charged with Article 96 since they were also charged with coup d'etat before the Makati Regional Trial Court.

All 184 enlisted personnel, who pleaded guilty to lesser charges last week, were temporarily assigned to the Headquarters Service Command at Camp Aguinaldo, where they would undergo two weeks of retraining before they can rejoin their mother units in the Army and Navy.

"May this serve as a lesson to our soldiers that they should remain loyal to the leadership of the Armed Forces and the government. I hope they realize that they should not be easily prevailed on to join something that they do not understand," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in a phone interview with reporters.

Ermita said he was "glad" that the soldiers would undergo a retraining. "This orientation course is good for the entire military organization," he said.

Bad fat

"Hopefully it would remove the negative traces of military adventurism, as well as reduce the bad fat and cholesterol that you had accumulated while under confinement," Camp Aguinaldo commander Brig. Gen. Jovenal Narcise quipped.

Defense lawyer Ruel Pulido, who was at the turnover rites said he was just very glad the soldiers have been released.

Also at hand was Deputy Chief of Staff for personnel (J1) Rear Adm. Mateo Mayuga who told the ex-mutineers to become "responsible soldiers."

He said the two-week retraining will include refreshers on military discipline and a stress debriefing.

The enlisted men were sentenced to demotion by three ranks and forfeiture of two-thirds of their basic pay for three to six months starting July 1.

The soldiers were part of a group of about 300 troops, led by young officers, who occupied the ritzy Oakwood Hotel and a nearby shopping mall in the capital's financial district and rigged the area with bombs. They surrendered peacefully after about 20 hours.

SOLDIERS who joined the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny undergo last-minute physical inspection for tattoos in Camp Aguinaldo before their release Friday after two years in detention.

VAL HANDUMON

EC ambassador says coup talk not good for RP

By Nikko Dizon

THE EUROPEAN Commission representative to the Philippines said on Thursday that persistent rumors of destabilization against the government "don't do anything good for the Philippines."

"I don't necessarily think that people are overly worried about it, but it certainly doesn't do anything good for the Philippines," Ambassador Jan de Kok told reporters in an interview.

"It's obvious when all these things appear in the media and some people that don't know the Philippines very well may think that there may be some truth in there. It's not helpful for the country."

De Kok said there could have been more "growing confidence in the Philippines" without such rumors.

"It is unfortunate that these things happen," he said.

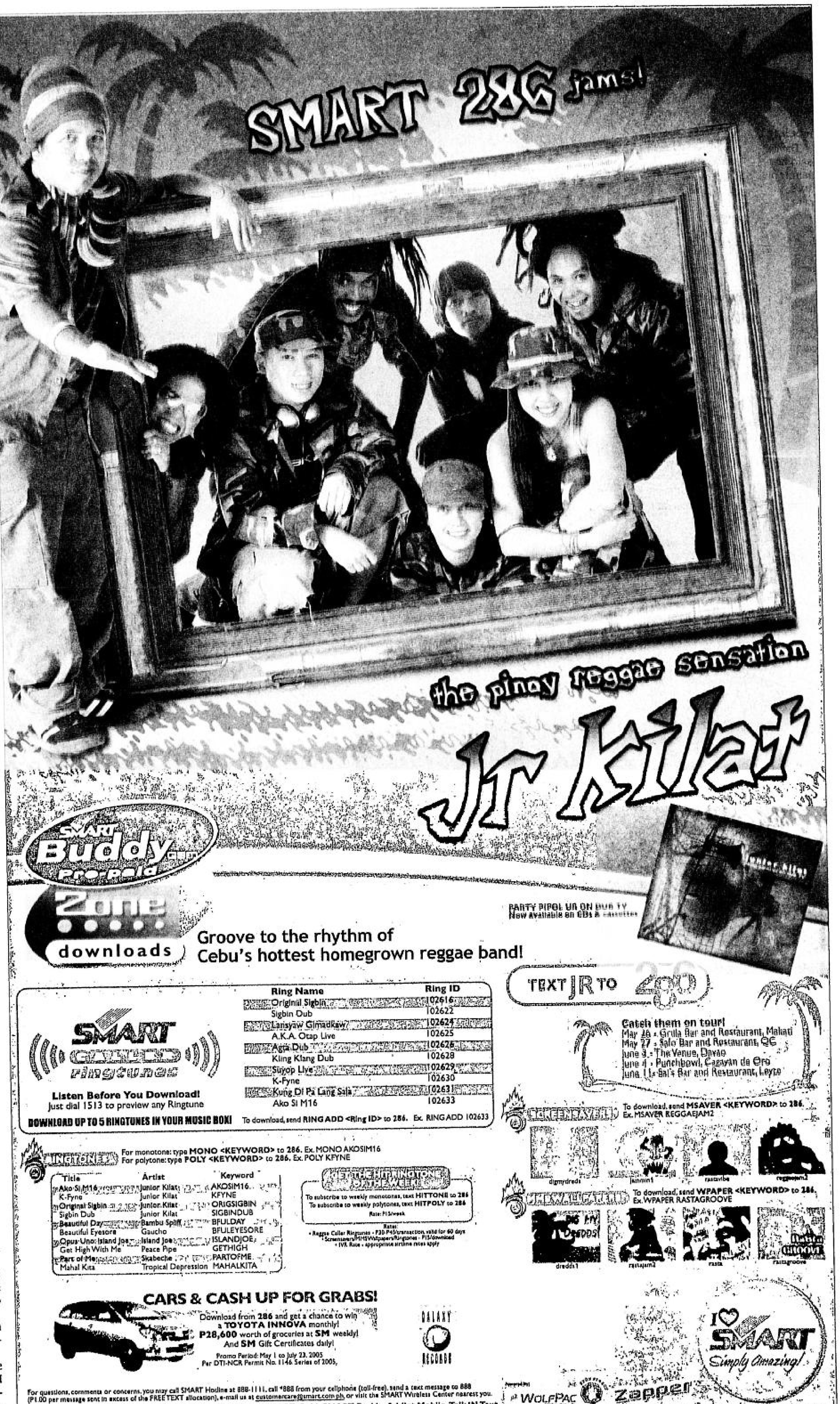
De Kok said that having lived in the Philippines, he has learned to "interpret these types of messages and events."

"We just go about our normal business and wait for things to happen," he said.

Nevertheless, De Kok said the EC continues to reassure European investors that the Philippines "is still a great place to come to and to do business."

He also believed that no destabilization against the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo would take place despite the rumors.

"I have heard these things for the last three years but I think there is no destabilization. I haven't heard about it. I haven't seen anything about it. We go about our normal business," he said.



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WOLFPAC Zapper

Tax-dodging entertainers must be punished–BIR

By DJ Yap

APPARENTLY not star-struck, Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno believes professional entertainers should not be spared punishment for not paying correct taxes.

"You give color to our lives. We do not want to see you behind bars," Parayno told TV and movie professionals in a briefing yesterday in which BIR officials educated them about their tax obligations.

The BIR chief reminded TV and movie stars of their status as role models and their "important role in society."

"If the idols have a 100-percent compliance, those who idolize them will also have a 100-percent compliance," he said.

Among the celebrities present at the briefing were Sunshine Cruz, Andrea del Rosario, Michael V., Francis Magalona and Judy Ann Santos.

A tax evasion case against Santos was filed by the BIR with the Department of Justice last Thursday. She was the third TV and movie star charged with tax evasion, after actor Richard Gomez and singer-actress Regine Velasquez.

Santos, who said she was "shocked" upon learning about the case filed against her, said the briefing was a good way to understand how they should settle their obligations. At one point, she appeared to be shedding tears while talking to reporters.

Parayno said the briefing was not intended to cause uneasiness among entertainment professionals, but to ensure voluntary and full tax compliance.

"The objective is to afford all our personalities in the movie and entertainment industry to correct whatever errors, omissions and understatements they may have made in their previous tax declarations," he said.

He added that the BIR would not be filing complaints against tax evaders among show biz personalities, under the BIR's Run After Tax Evaders Program, if it was not 100-percent sure of the evidence.

At the briefing, entertainment professionals, including representatives of TV and movie stars, were treated to a crash course on how to settle their obligations, such as book-maintenance, income and business taxes, forms to fill out, among many others.

Parayno said he understood if other major stars, including Velasquez and Gomez, did not make it to the event because of busy schedules, but hoped their representatives would come to clarify what went wrong with their tax declarations.

At one point, German Moreno, president of the Katipunan ng mga Artista sa Pelikulang Pilipino at Telebisyon, asked that a tax "amnesty" be granted to members of the TV and movie industry, considering its sad plight.

But Parayno said it was unfair to Santos, Velasquez and Gomez, if allowances were given to other movie and TV personalities.

He added that the BIR would pursue these and other cases.

Late last year, a similar briefing was conducted by the BIR for medical practitioners, but Parayno said the media did not notice it. TV and movie personalities, he said, were not being singled out.

DZRH-Dagupan station manager Allan Sison shows bullet hole to Pangasinan newsmen. An unidentified gunman fired at his service vehicle on Thursday in Lingayen, Pangasinan. RAY B. ZAMBRANO

Gunman fires at dzRH vehicle in Pangasinan; no one hurt

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—A vehicle belonging to private radio station dzRH was shot at on Thursday while it was parked in front of a hotel-restaurant here where station manager Allan Sison was attending a wedding as a sponsor.

Sison said Randall Bernal, a councilor from this town could be behind the shooting. He said he had accused Bernal of possible involvement in drug trafficking in his radio program last year.

"I usually have a driver with me but that day I drove the patrol vehicle. Maybe the bullet was meant for me," he said.

Pangasinan police director Senior Supt. Mario Sandiego said a deformed slug was found inside the Nissan pick-up which was parked near Consuelo's Hotel and Restaurant from noon to 1 p.m. The slug has been sent to Camp Crame for ballistic examination.

Sison said he found out about the shooting when he was to board the vehicle. "I called up (Sandiego) who immediately sent policemen to the place," said Sison, who immediately asked for a police escort.

Supt. Ricardo Zapata, police chief here, said some customers at the restaurant recalled hearing an explosion but had thought it stemmed from a bursting tire.

The councilor Sison tagged as the one behind the shooting also attended the wedding. "He looked at me angrily when he saw me," the broadcaster said.

Bernal denied involvement in the shooting. He told the INQUIRER that he welcomed "any investigation from the police and questions from reporters."

"It's true that he had been attacking me through his radio program when I was not really involved in an issue he was discussing. I know him and I don't give a damn what he says (on air)," Bernal said.

The Pangasinan Tri Media Association viewed "with deep concern" the shooting incident "whether or not the bullet fired at the radio station's vehicle was meant to just scare Sison." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

2 holidays in November, December

MALACAÑANG yesterday declared Oct. 31 and Dec. 26 non-working holidays to allow the mainly Roman Catholic country a longer observance of two important religious events.

Oct. 31, a Monday, is the day before All Saints' Day when Filipinos pay respects to dead relatives. A holiday on Dec. 26, also a Monday, will provide a longer Christmas break.

The proclamation, signed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, also declared Monday, Nov. 28 a non-working holiday in lieu of the Nov. 30 observance of "Bonifacio Day," which honors Filipino revolutionary Andres Bonifacio.

"A longer weekend also promotes domestic tourism and enables employers to plan their work schedules effectively and efficiently, resulting in improved productivity," Ermita said in the order.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's government, which is pushing a series of reforms to curb corruption and improve revenue collection, routinely shifts holidays to create longer weekends as a way to stimulate consumer spending.

Last month, most state workers were ordered onto four-day weeks to help conserve energy during the hot summer months of April and May as global oil prices stay high. *Reuters*

Mikey Arroyo launches media blitz to polish image

By Gil C. Cabacungan

LIKE mother, like son.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo is also embarking on a public relations campaign to brush up his image that has been battered by persistent allegations linking him to "jueteng" bribery.

Arroyo is the first lawmaker featured in a vanity program for select members of the House of Representatives currently being aired on state-owned television RPN-9.

The 30-minute program, titled "Pangako Mo: House of Representatives," had its maiden offering Wednesday morning (replayed yesterday morning) and it featured Arroyo's projects in Pampanga as well as interviews with local government officials, who heaped lavish praises on the President's eldest son who also dabbled in show biz prior to making the political plunge.

Arroyo appears to be taking her cue from President Macapagal-Arroyo who has also accepted the "voluntary offers" of the country's top spin doctors (Public Relations Society of the Philippines), media moguls (AD Board of the Philippines), and the local entertainment industry represented by Viva Entertainment big boss Vic del Rosario to brush up her image following a steep plunge in her ratings since her election last year.

Cerge Remonde, group for government mass media which runs the state-owned TV stations, said that no government funds were spent on the program as it was produced by a block timer, Art Depth Productions.

Art Depth's Benjamin Abelarde, in a phone interview, confirmed that his company produced the program to be aired on RPN-9 for 13 weeks "at less than P50,000" per episode.

"Arroyo and the congressmen we will feature in our program did not spend a single centavo for our show," said Abelarde who stressed that his company undertook the project to earn profits. "We're looking for advertisers just like other shows. We have to rate."

Correction

IN THE story "Bomb sent to radioman kills boy" by Anthony S. Allada, Grace C. Albasin and Germelina A. Lacorte, which was published on Page A1 on May 17, the sixth line of the 12th paragraph should have read "... Maramag and other areas" instead of "... Dangcagan and other areas."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent, pending the appointment of a new readers' advocate, to Isagani Yambot, publisher, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address: iyambot@inquirer.com.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, May 21, 2005
7th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Sir 17:1-15
Gospel: Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing their little children to him to have him touch them, and the disciples rebuked them for this.

When Jesus noticed it, he was very angry and said, "Let the children come to me and don't stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he took the children in his arms and laying his hands on them, blessed them.

Commentary

The crowd brings their children to Jesus to have him bless them and touch them but the disciples are pushing them away—children are not important. They are trying to choose who gets Jesus' undivided attention and Jesus is annoyed at his disciples' lack of care and attention to all in that society who were considered useless, like slaves and children. Jesus rarely is angry, but he's angry at his disciples' lack of awareness of who is beloved of God. He sets the children up as a standard, appalling the disciples, telling them to watch the children and to learn to receive the kingdom like a child lives—vulnerable, open, dependent on others, needing to trust for their very survival, welcoming anyone. Jesus blesses them and lays hands on them, touching them with intimacy and acceptance and pure love. We would learn much from Jesus and instead of requiring children to go to school, allowing to know acceptance, blessing and singled out status within our churches.

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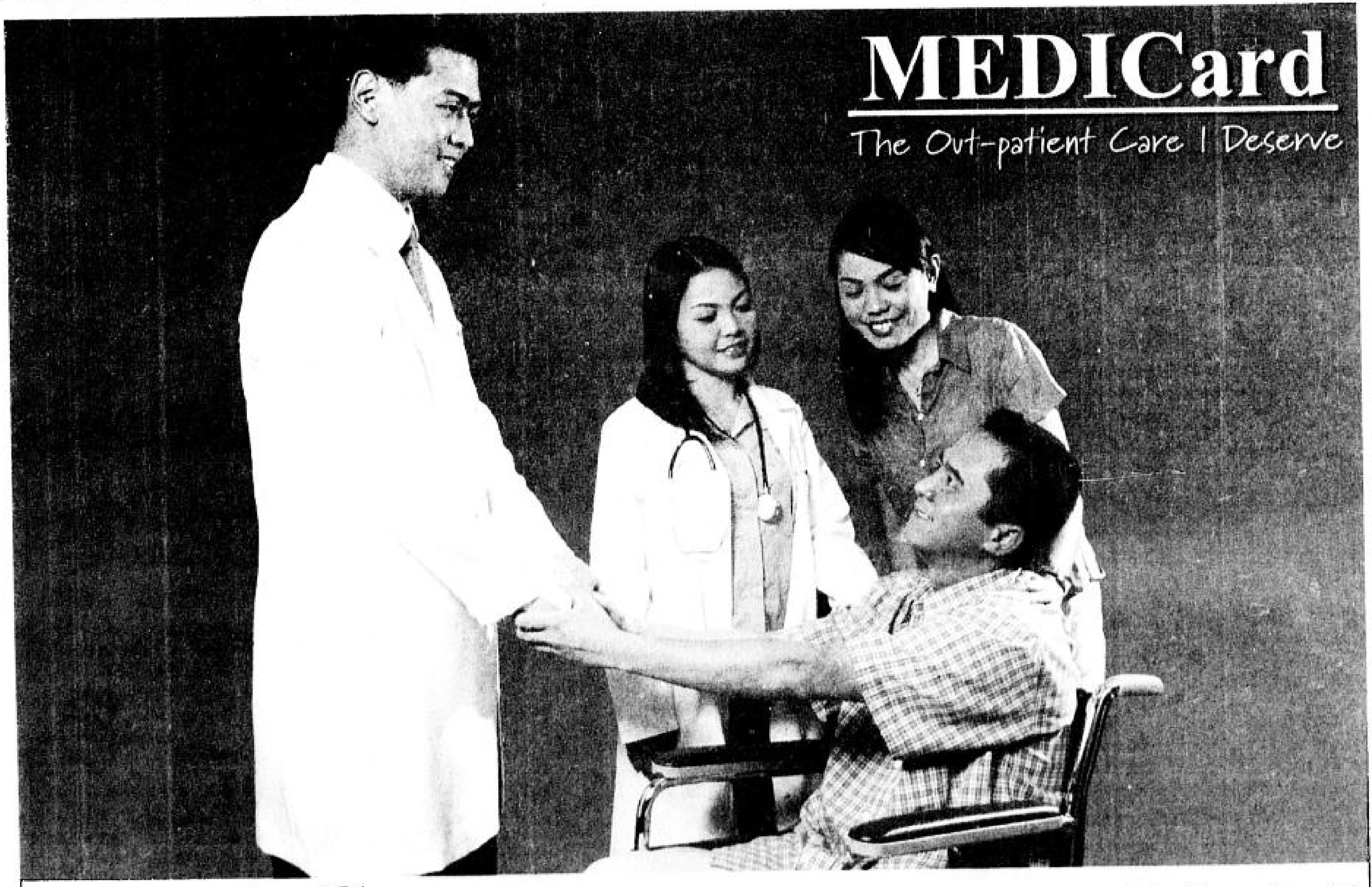
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (SPECIAL CONTRACTS: SALES)—Double sales—Article 1544 of the Civil Code contemplates a case of double or multiple sales by a single vendor. More specifically, it covers a situation where a single vendor sold one and the same immovable property to two or more buyers. According to a noted civil law author, it is necessary that the conveyance must have been made by a party who has an existing right in the thing and the power to dispose of it. It cannot be invoked where the two different contracts of sale are made by two different persons, one of them not being the owner of the property sold. And even if the sale was made by the same person, if the second sale was made when such person was no longer the owner of the property, because it had been acquired by the first purchaser in full dominion, the second purchaser cannot acquire any right. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Tinga, Consolidated Rural Bank (Cagayan Valley), Inc. v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 132161, January 17, 2005)

BY R.B. VERA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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTENSITY G joins harvest festivities in Lucban and Tayabas

Globe's roving regional roadshow Intensity G kickstarted the merry month of May with twin showcases of harvest and heritage in the agricultural heartland of Quezon province. Widely known for such local delicacies as *longganisa* and *budin* (cassava cake) respectively, the neighboring towns of *Lucban* and *Tayabas* honor the farmer saint San Isidro Labrador and celebrate the good earth with the colorful *Pahiyas de Lucban* and cultural *Mayohan sa Tayabas.*

Intensity G's fun-loving island-hopper July was on hand to check out the festive fare and party atmosphere, making the rounds at the *Pahiyas* Grand Parade route, even paying house calls at some of the *kiping*-clad dwellings. July totally immersed himself in *Tayabas* tradition, sampling the world-famous *lambanog* and joining the much-anticipated *Hagisan ng Suman.* And of course, no Intensity G celebration would be complete without July's freebie giveaways at the Globe-powered concerts of Session Road, Moonstar 88 and Route 16, as well as the various sales blitzes stationed in each municipality.

While both festivals hosted a diverse array of activities, it was apparent that the townspeople held traditional customs in high regard. "No matter where they are, or what the circumstances might be, [the people of Quezon] pass on the values they grew up with and maintain close ties to home," attests *Lucban* vice-mayor Armando Abutal, a longtime Globe subscriber. Coming from a culture where casual conversations are integral to such daily activities as threshing rice and *buntal* weaving, *Lucbanins* and *Taybasins* have a natural affinity for the mobile connectivity offered by Globe. With Globe's more than 1,500 new cellsites nationwide, the people of Quezon continue to strengthen lifelong relationships and maintain contact with family and friends who have journeyed away from their native soil.

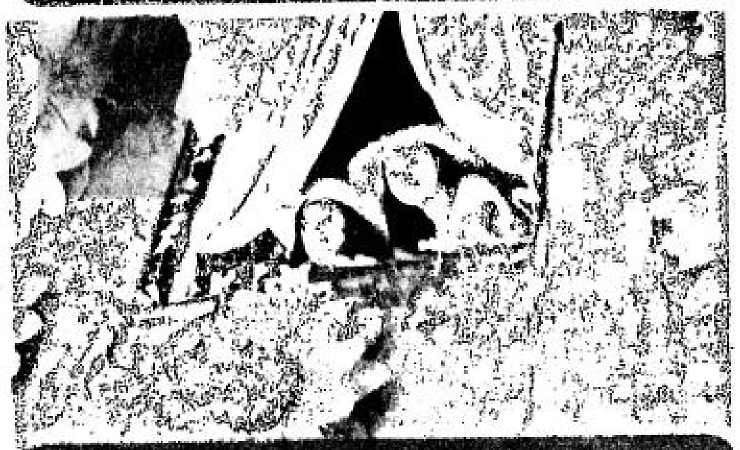
Indeed, the Intensity G celebrations of *Pahiyas* and *Mayohan* were a successful blend of the modern mobile lifestyle with local traditions and beliefs. Watch out for the next Intensity G fiesta coming soon to your hometown!

The popular Globe Gizmo Prepaid and Gentxt *higantes* add to Globe's larger-than life presence in the *Pahiyas*.

July samples the world-famous *lambanog* of Mallari Distillery during his *Tayabas* visit.

Students of *Tayabas* East District Elementary School wow the crowd during the street dance competition.

Fiesta favorite July looks on as vice-mayor Armando Abutal makes a call with his Globe Handyphone.



Fresh faces and festive *kiping* decorate the houses of *Lucban*.

Intensity G's July joins the annual *Hagisan ng Suman* at the *Mayohan sa Tayabas* festival.

Globe makes fiesta activities like the first-ever *longganisa* making contest possible.

Weavers take part in the first-ever *buntal* and *buri* hat weaving competition.

Threshing rice the traditional way at the town plaza.

Lucbanins flocked to the various sales blitzes stationed across town.

Intesnsity G treated the local crowd with performances from Moonstar 88 and Session Road.

ANG LAKAS NG DATING NG GLOBE!

WHO: Bird flu 'pandemic will happen'

GENEVA—Bird flu may be capable of human-to-human transmission, raising fears of a global pandemic, the World Health Organization said.

"We believe a pandemic will happen but we don't know when," said Guenael Rodier, head of communicable diseases surveillance and response at the UN health agency.

Although only a few dozen people have so far died from bird flu since it appeared in 2003, experts fear that if the virus mutates to allow easy transmission among humans, it could spread rapidly and widely, killing millions of people.

Investigations in Vietnam earlier this year concluded that "the viruses are continuing to evolve and pose a continuing and potentially growing pandemic threat," the UN health agency said.

"We don't know whether the pandemic will occur next week or next year," said Dr. Klaus Stohr, WHO's influenza chief, who was speaking Thursday in Geneva on the findings of a conference earlier this month in Manila, Philippines. "There is no evidence in any direction, but there are concerns."

The H5N1 strain of bird flu in Southeast Asia has so far only jumped from animals to humans, but not from person to person. It has killed 37 people in Vietnam, 12 in Thailand and four from Cambodia since late 2003, Stohr said.

"The little information that we have could possibly identify that the virus is changing and the way it interacts with humans is changing," Stohr told reporters.

Latest studies show it would take three months for a possible pandemic to spread around the world, Stohr said.

Monitoring of the virus should be stepped up and there should be increased control of the disease in poultry, WHO said in a report on its website.

But evolution of a pandemic strain of virus can happen in numerous small steps, none of which is sufficient to signal clearly that a pandemic is about to start, WHO cautioned.

"If public health authorities move too soon, then unnecessary and costly actions may be taken," WHO said.

But if action is delayed until there is unmistakable evidence that the virus has become sufficiently transmissible among people, then it may be too late for an effective response.

"This poses a difficult public health dilemma," WHO said. *AP*

PERIPATETIC SENATOR
Sen. Richard Gordon goes spelunking in Norzagaray, Bulacan, Friday. The lawmaker from Olongapo City visited the cave used by Filipino guerrillas and allied forces during the 60th anniversary of World War II battle of Ipo Dam against the Japanese forces. AVITO C. DALAN/CONTRIBUTOR

Mom finally gets ashes of daughter killed in tsunami

By Nikko Dizon

THE GREEN Thai silk cloth with gold trimmings might have well stood for the youthful beauty of 19-year-old Cruzett Cruz.

The stunning fabric was wrapped around the urn that held the cremated remains of Cruz, a Filipino overseas worker killed in the tsunami last Dec. 26.

Cruz worked as a dancer in Phuket, Thailand with several other Filipinos and earned some $350 a month in her first venture outside the Philippines.

Yesterday, her mother Luzviminda, held the urn in a tight embrace, sobbing as she called out her name.

Luzviminda was accompanied by a younger daughter and Yolanda Tuzara, mother of Ria Jane, a co-worker of Cruzett's who was also killed in the tsunami.

Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Jose Brillantes and Aquino Sultan, consular officer from the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand turned over the urn to Luzviminda.

Luzviminda recalled that she did not want her daughter to work in Thailand but the young woman was insistent.

Cruzett was recruited by a certain Theresa Joy Roxas and Charles Brown, who both survived the tsunami.

Cruzett and her companions left on Oct. 15. She last spoke to her mother on Dec. 23 when her father, Jaime, was confined in a hospital for mild stroke. Cruzett had promised to send money for her father's hospitalization.

A MOTHER'S GRIEF. Mrs. Luzviminda Cruz cries and holds on tight to the urn holding the ashes of her daughter Cruzett. RUDY ESPERAS

Jaime died on March 23, Yolanda said.

The remains of Cruzett and Ria Jane were identified using DNA testing.

Brillantes urged Luzviminda and Yolanda to pursue the charges of illegal recruitment and negligence they had filed against Roxas and Brown before the justice department.

DOJ to probe 'escape' of drug lord

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has formed a four-man fact-finding committee to investigate why an alleged drug lord was allowed to leave the country despite the presence of a hold departure order against him.

Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said he expects the committee to release its findings next week. He said the team was formed to ensure that there would be no whitewash in the investigation.

The committee is chaired by DOJ prosecutor Jaime Umpo. Its members are DOJ Senior Prosecutor Paulino Gallegos, Immigration Administrative Chief Felino Quirante, Jr. and Immigration Regulation Chief Gary Mendoza. The BI is an attached agency of the DOJ.

The team has begun looking into reports that a Benson Chua, who is the namesake of a suspected drug lord, left the Philippines on May 14 through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

His departure took place despite a hold departure order on a Benson Chua who was placed on the list on Jan. 3 upon the request of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Hold departure orders are issued either by the courts or by the DOJ. Pending the release of such orders, the BI usually places crime suspects on its watch list to prevent them from leaving the country without clearance from authorities.

3 Filipinos back home after ordeal in Kabul

THREE overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) were repatriated to the Philippines from Afghanistan early this month after their American employer allegedly committed "gross violations" in their employment contract.

Using its Assistance-to-Nationals funds, the Department of Foreign Affairs shouldered the repatriation expenses of Maricris Santos, Marife Mortel, and Norberto Babala.

The three requested for repatriation from the Philippine Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, citing the gross violations of their employment contract by a certain Michael Mester.

The Filipinos worked at the Palace Bar and Restaurant in Kabul's prominent Karte Seh district, which is known to more affluent Afghans, according to information obtained by Charge d' Affaires Agnes Cervantes of the Philippine Embassy in Pakistan. *Nikko Dizon*

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Aussie gov't offers to foot Vivian's bills

FILIPINO-AUSTRALIAN Vivian Alvarez answers reporters during a news conference at a hotel in Makati City Thursday. BULLIT MARQUEZ/AP

CANBERRA, Australia—A Philippine-born Australian woman who was wrongly deported could have her travel, medical and accommodation costs reimbursed by the government, her lawyer said Friday.

Lawyer George Newhouse said immigration department officials made what he described as a preliminary offer from the government late Thursday night.

The offer came after Vivian Alvarez, a dual citizen deported from Australia following a car accident four years ago, told a news conference in Manila Thursday that she may not sue the Australian government if it agrees to pay her medical bills and other costs.

Newhouse would not detail the precise terms of the offer.

"The offer is basically to cover her travel arrangements, her care when she gets back to Australia, her accommodation and her medical needs," Newhouse told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. "Those are the vital ingredients that are necessary to rehabilitate Vivian."

"It took a while; I think that one would have to say that the government is paying attention to this matter now," he added.

In Manila, Alvarez's lawyer Harry Freedman, said Thursday she hopes to return to her adopted country "within weeks" so she can be reunited with her two sons and continue her medical treatment.

Newhouse said more negotiation was required before the government's offer could be accepted.

"I just hope their response time is fast so she doesn't have to delay her trip back to Australia," Newhouse said.

Alvarez was still having trouble with her mobility because of injuries from her 2001 car accident but was improving, he said.

"She's getting assessed by medical specialists over in Manila and we need to bring her back here, have her properly assessed and get her rehabilitated," he said.

Alvarez was discovered last week in a Roman Catholic hospice run by nuns in Olongapo City. The Australian Embassy moved her to Manila while discussions go on about her future.

Her case forms part of a debate raging in Australia about Prime Minister John Howard's immigration policies, which have been criticized by international rights groups as too harsh and discriminatory. **AP**

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FREE again after almost two years in detention, 184 enlisted men who participated in the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny are released from detention on Friday a week after they pleaded guilty to a lesser offense. VAL HANDUMON

Want to catch a fugitive? Check the Yellow Pages

From page A1

campaign against crime in their own neighborhoods if they have at their disposal a national directory of fugitives.

"To defeat the enemy, we must know them," he said, paraphrasing the oft-quoted line in Sun Tzu's "Art of War." "But how can we do it when there's no national directory of fugitives from justice in the first place?"

Blurred photos

The senator noted that the Philippine National Police has so far managed to post only "blurred photographs" of the less than 100 "most wanted criminals" in its website. There is no wanted poster for petty thieves.

"*Akyat-bahay* (porch climbers) robberies, car thefts and street crimes are not pulled off by these underworld moguls but by career criminals who have managed to embed themselves in their communities, unknown to their unsuspecting neighbors," he said.

Recto said that the directory should be prepared with "greatest care and attention to details" to avoid including the names of innocent persons or those whose cases have been dismissed by the local courts.

He did not say if the directory would include pictures of the fugitives.

Master list on the Net

Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, welcomed Recto's proposal, saying this would improve their present system of keeping tabs on the activities of criminals.

"This will help us in our objective of disseminating information about them, monitoring their activities and eventually apprehending them," he said in an interview. He also said the master list should be posted in the Internet for quick updating.

Bataoil admitted that the PNP merely keeps a list of "wanted criminals" in the national, regional, provincial and municipal levels, but has never gotten around to disseminating this to the media.

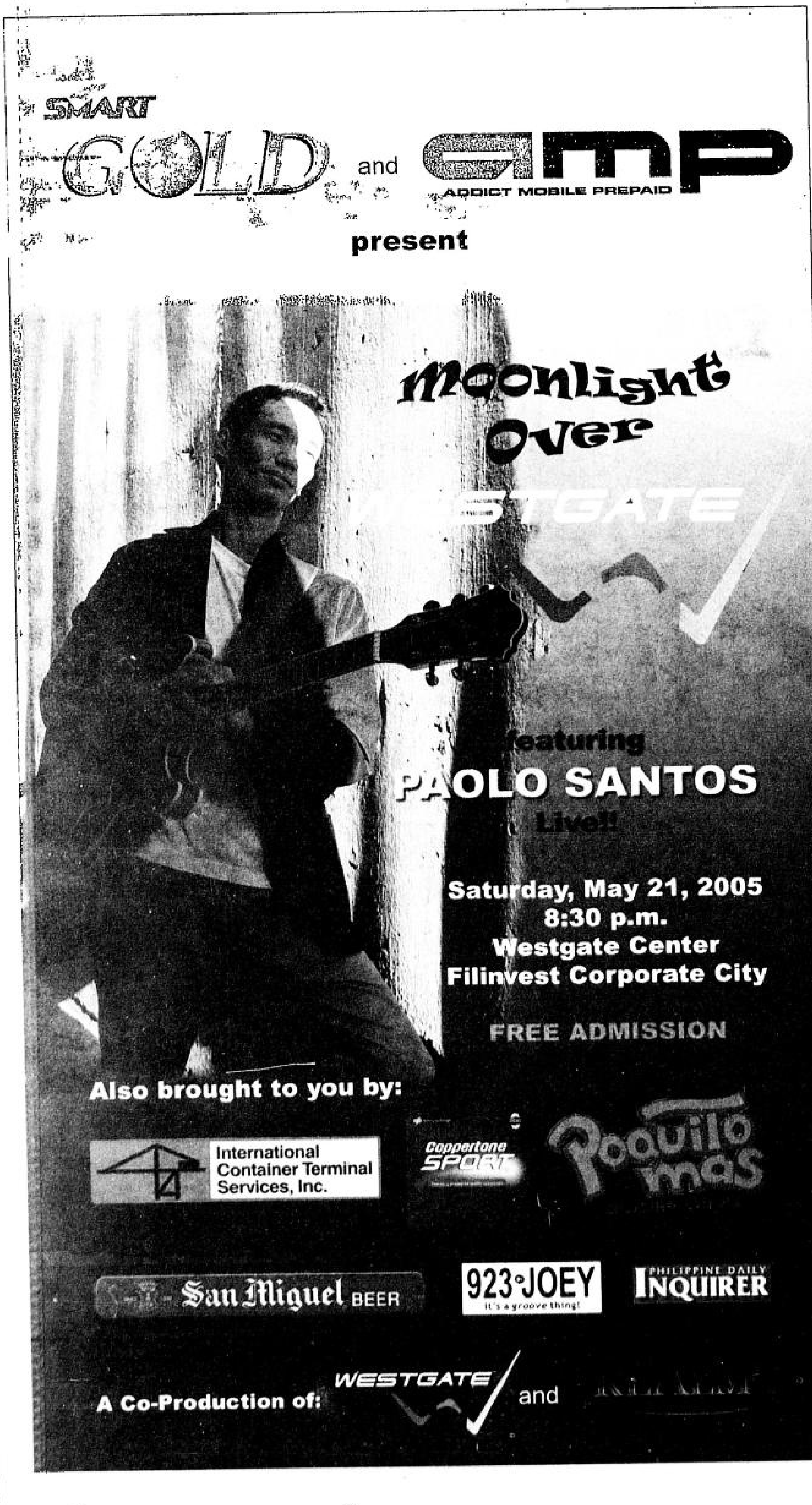
Officials of the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group admitted in September 2004 that they had failed to serve 250,000 warrants for the arrest of crime suspects for the past several years.

84,000 crimes yearly

Recto said this figure was not far-fetched because a "notoriously slow justice system" could not match the 84,000 cases of crimes reported to the authorities every year.

In 2003 alone, cases of index crimes, or crimes against persons and property, and 41,017 cases of non-index crimes stood at 42,687, he said.

"Daily, there were 18 murders, 11 homicides, nine rapes, 21 robberies and 27 thefts that year, and these were just the reported ones. The actual cases of theft, for example, could be higher than 27 a day if we factor in the number of cell phone snatchings with the number of victims opting not to report it to the police," he said.



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Chavit: I've never been into jueteng

By Norman Bordadora

"I'VE NEVER been into jueteng!"

Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson made this emphatic denial he had returned to operating the illegal numbers game in the Ilocos region and in the Cordillera provinces, saying he never dabbled on illegal gambling even before he had a falling out with then President Joseph Estrada.

"Erap only used me [at that time to operate jueteng]. How can I go back to something I was never really part of," the governor told the INQUIRER in a brief phone interview yesterday.

Singson, a confessed former crony and drinking buddy of Estrada, blew the whistle on the then President's alleged involvement in jueteng and triggered events that led to the second People Power on Edsa in 2001. Singson at the time of his exposé admitted that he was into illegal gambling operations.

Asked if there's jueteng operations going on in Ilocos Sur and nearby provinces, Singson said: "There is none. There's none in all those places."

"These are not true and are just meant to destroy me," Singson said.

Told that the new witnesses include a former jueteng lord displaced by Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda in Bicol and a couple of bagmen, Singson said: "I don't know anything about that. Interview me about something else."

The witnesses have tagged First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo as among the top recipients of protection money from jueteng operators.

Name in bagman's ledger

Singson's name appeared in a ledger shown to the INQUIRER by a jueteng bagman in an interview earlier this week. It identified him as the jueteng operator in the two Ilocos provinces, Abra and Isabela.

The ledger contained the names of jueteng operators in more than 20 areas in Luzon and how much they give to alleged bagmen Gener David, alias Boy Tangkad, and Sr. Supt. Pat Hernandez of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

According to the ledger, Singson is giving out almost P2 million from and for his jueteng operations in the four provinces. The bagman, who had manifested his intention to testify in the Senate, said the money is for PNP officials in Camp Crame including PNP chief Director General Arturo Lomibao.

The bagman's ledger also named the other local officials operating jueteng as Governors Armando Sanchez of Batangas, Jose Yap of Tarlac, Jesus Typoco Jr. of Camarines Norte, Luis Raymund Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, and Vice Gov. Mariano Cristino Joson of Nueva Ecija.

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, president of the Governors League of the Philippines, said the league is bent on policing their ranks to cleanse them of erring local officials.

Gov't docs declare . . .

From page A1

Hyperproductive speech, elevated self-esteem, thought disturbances described as flights of ideas and racing thoughts."

However, Velasco said the conclusion of the doctors on the mental fitness of Balley did not mean she was cleared outright of the allegations against her.

He said that if there was evidence pointing to the culpability of Balley, prosecutors might still file charges against her.

But Velasco admitted that her condition would delay the filing of any such case because prosecutors would be able to get statements from her only during her "lucid intervals."

Under the law, an insane person who committed a crime is exempt from punishment unless it is proven that the person committed it during a lucid interval.

If probable cause is established and charges are filed against her, Velasco said prosecutors would first ask that Balley be sent to a mental institution for treatment.

Case to proceed

If she gets well, she will then be asked to face justice, he said.

"We can proceed with the case against the others accused of the crime ahead of Balley," he said, when asked about the possibility that any case against her would be relegated to the "archives" while she underwent treatment.

Lumagui, one of three suspects in custody, had claimed they were told by Balley to break into the house and scare Alicia because the diplomat had allegedly been too tight in releasing to her the money due her.

Velasco said prosecutors were not totally ruling out the involvement of others.

Among those prosecutors have questioned was another Ramos sister, Leticia, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) director for strategic planning and policy division.

Ocular inspection

According to police investigation, Leticia escaped from the robbers after they broke into the Ramoses house in Makati.

Velasco said prosecutors had scheduled an ocular inspection of the crime scene.

"We want to know the distance between the house and the hospital," he said.

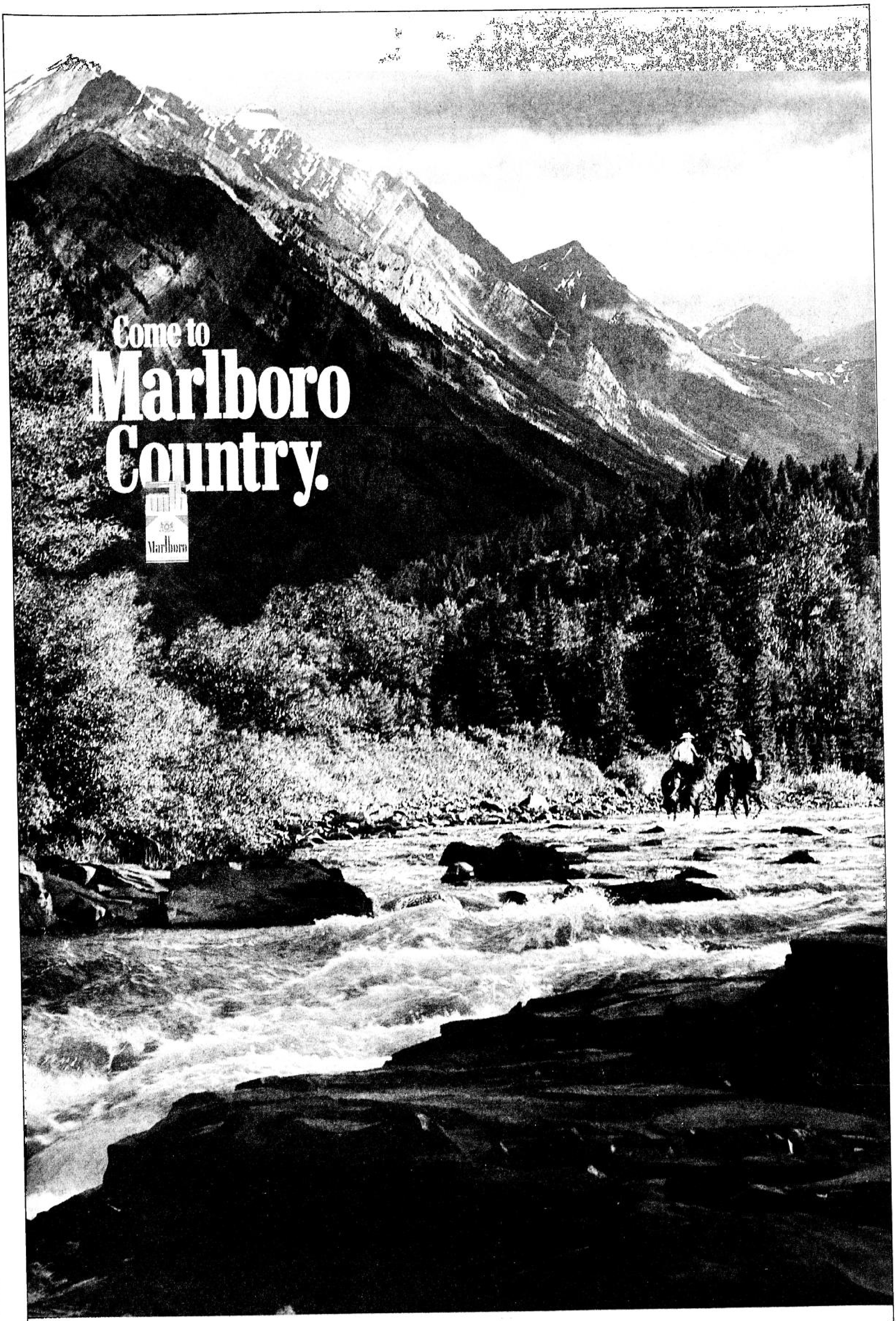
Velasco summoned Leticia to the preliminary hearing of the case Thursday to seek clarification on why she decided to report the break-in to the Saint Claire Hospital nearby, instead of shouting to her neighbors for help.

She was also seen by neighbors supposedly "walking casually" to the hospital after breaking free from duct tapes the suspected killers had tied her with.

State witness?

Suspect Lumagui yesterday saw and asked Velasco if he could be admitted as a state witness. Velasco said the DOJ was still evaluating the evidence against all suspects, including Lumagui, Joel Ablay and Michael Cenil as well as several Jane Does and John Does.

One of the suspects, a certain Jun Maricar, is at large.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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Red Cross raised Koran abuse issue in 2002, US admits

WASHINGTON—The International Committee of the Red Cross told the Pentagon as early as 2002 detainees at Guantanamo Bay prison had reported US personnel mishandled the Koran, Red Cross and US officials said on Thursday.

The acknowledgment of the documentation of alleged abuse of the Koran came as Washington sought to defuse anger in the Muslim world after Newsweek reported the Muslim holy book was flushed down the toilet at the Guantanamo prison. The magazine retracted the article on Monday after it sparked deadly riots and was condemned by the Bush administration.

The International Committee of the Red Cross told the Pentagon "multiple" times in 2002 and early 2003 prisoners at the base in Cuba alleged US officials showed "disrespect" for the Muslim holy book, said Simon Schorno, an ICRC spokesperson.

"The US government took corrective measures and those allegations have not resurfaced," Schorno said.

The ICRC spokesperson declined to specify if the complaints included the flushing of the Koran down the toilet or if US officials used the disrespect as part of interrogations.

Members of the humanitarian organization, which is given access to the prison, did not witness any mishandling of the Koran.

Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesperson, said the ICRC has come to the Pentagon "on rare occasion" with allegations made by detainees at Guantanamo.

"They are consistent with the type of things that we have talked about, what we have found in log entries (at Guantanamo), to include things like a Koran inadvertently falling to the floor," Whitman said.

Former Guantanamo prisoners and lawyers for detainees have for months accused US personnel at Guantanamo of putting the Koran into toilets. Pentagon officials said this week they did not consider such statements as credible allegations meriting investigation.

Human Rights Watch said the dispute over Newsweek's report overshadowed the fact that religious humiliation of detainees at Guantanamo Bay and elsewhere has been widespread.

"Around the world, the United States has been humiliating Muslim detainees by offending their religious beliefs," Reed Brody of the New York-based group said.

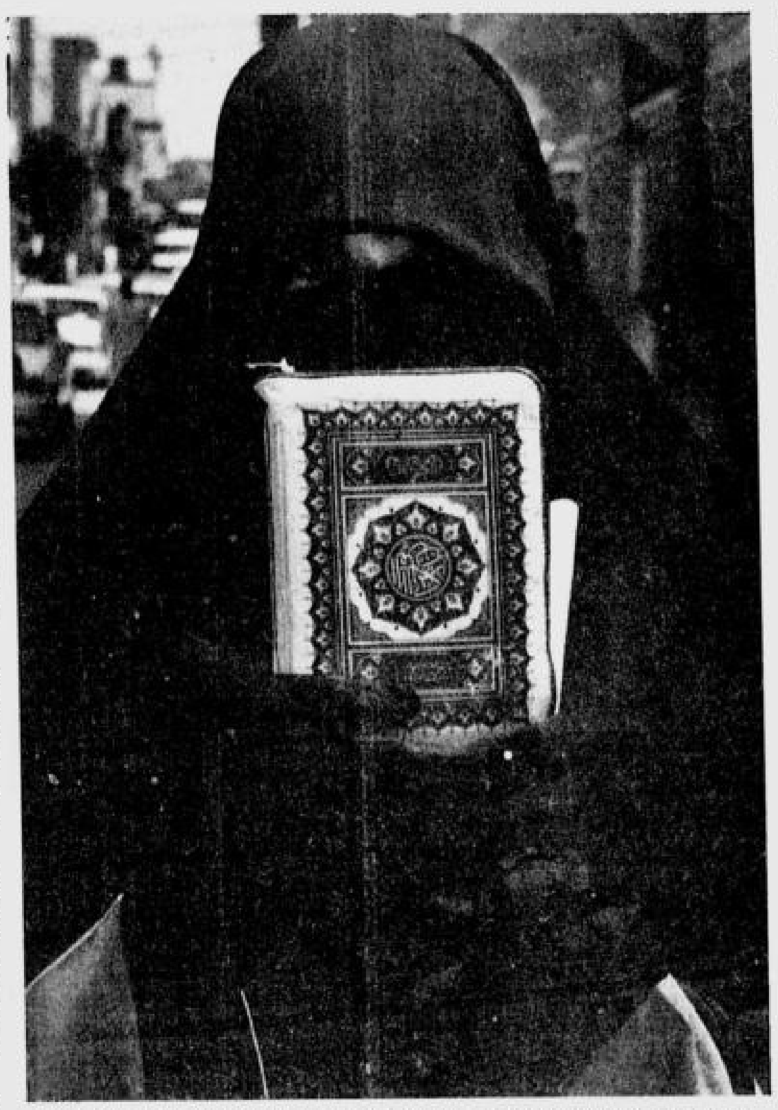
The group cited a former Army translator, who accused Guantanamo guards of routinely tossing the Koran on the ground.

Muslims consider the Koran the literal word of God and treat each book with reverence.

In January 2003, the US military issued guidelines to personnel at the base that included the order: "Ensure that the Koran is not placed in offensive areas such as the floor, near the toilet or sink, near the feet or dirty/wet areas." "The guidelines didn't come out of nowhere. You don't get such orders unless there's some problem, concern or controversy," said a US official who asked not to be named.

Whitman said that "to the best of my knowledge" the concerns presented by the ICRC did not prompt the memo.

The US Southern Command, responsible for Guantanamo, Cuba, began a fact-finding inquiry last week in the aftermath of the Newsweek report into whether US personnel at the prison put the Koran in toilets. The Pentagon has said it has so far found nothing to substantiate the allegation. *Reuters*



A PALESTINIAN woman holding the Muslim holy book Koran during an anti-US protest at the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza Strip May 13. REUTERS

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NOTICE OF 22-HOUR WATER SERVICE INTERRUPTION IN PARAÑAQUE, PASAY AND MAKATI CITY

Maynilad Water Services, Inc. has scheduled a 22-hour water service interruption in Parañaque, Pasay and Makati Cities from 12 noon, Wednesday, May 25 to 10 a.m., Thursday, May 26, 2005.

The water service interruption is due to the looping of a suction and discharge line in the new Villamor Pumping Station along MSDR near the approach of the Skyway (South Bound), Pasay City.

The project is meant to improve the water supply in the area.

The following areas will have no water during the service interruption:

Parañaque City: commercial establishments along West Service Road from Edison to Marcelo Green Village; UPS 1; UPS 2; Marian Park 2; Makati South Hills; Merville; Carmella Merville; Molave Park; Buenavida; South Admiral; Executive Heights; Moonwalk-1 (PHIMRA); Moonwalk-2 (ROMVI); Moonwalk-3; South Green Park; commercial establishments along Iba Road from Bicutan Interchange to Malugay; Bricktown; Halik Alon; Sun Valley; BLS; Marimar; Santa Ana Village; Countryside; Ramos Village; Culdesac; MGV; SAV 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11; Greenheights; Remanville; Buensoceso; Malacañang Village; Brgy. Village; Welcome Village; Camella Classics; Equity Homes; Santiago Homes; Ina Homes; Fil-Asia; F.C. Santos; Villa Mendoza; Justina Village; Vitalez Compound; UPS 5; San Dionisio Village; Rainbow Village; and Lopez Village.

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Pasay City: Villamor Air Base, Kalayaan Village, Merville Access Road (Bo. Balabag), Wella Compound, and a portion of Maricaban (St. Peter, Higgings and Almazor).

In view of the water service interruption, affected customers are advised to store water good for 22 hours. They may check with Maynilad Hotline 1626, the nearest branch office, or their barangay chairman for the schedule of water rationing in their respective areas.

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Pictures of Saddam in underwear prompt probe

LONDON—A British newspaper ran intimate photographs Friday of ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in US military custody, including one of him half-naked, prompting an investigation into possible human rights abuses.

Under the headline "Tyrant's in his pants," The Sun ran a front-page photo of a bare-chested Saddam standing in white underwear and holding an item of clothing as he appeared to be getting dressed, with an unpainted wooden door behind him.

In the accompanying article along with other intimate photographs of him, the mass-circulation daily quotes US military sources as saying they handed over the photos in the hope of dealing a body blow to the resistance in Iraq.

"Saddam is not superman or God, he is now just an aging and humble old man. It's important that the people of Iraq see him like that to destroy the myth," the source was quoted as saying.

"Maybe that will kill a bit of the passion in the fanatics who still follow him," the source said. "It's over, guys. The evil days of Saddam's Baath Party are never coming back—and here's the proof."

In Baghdad, a US military spokesperson said the military was investigating the photos of Saddam to find out who took them and decide what kind of disciplinary action should be taken.

"There is an investigation," US S/Sgt. Don Dees said. "A policy prohibits us from exploitation of detainees and that policy is in place to preserve their dignity." *AFP*

SHAIMA Rezayee, an Afghan television presenter, in a TV footage shown on Feb. 17. A gunman shot and killed Rezayee on May 18, two months after she was fired from her job on a pop music program after complaints from religious conservatives. REUTERS

US Army probe details abuse of Afghan prisoners

KABUL—Two detainees in US military custody in Afghanistan in 2002 died after being severely beaten as part of a pattern of abuse by young and badly-trained soldiers, the New York Times reported Friday quoting from a leaked US Army criminal investigation report.

Although the two deaths were reported earlier, the graphic details of their abuse come at a sensitive time in Afghanistan after at least 14 people were killed in anti-US demonstrations this month sparked by an erroneous report that a Koran had been desecrated by US investigators at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

The 2,000-page file on incidents at the Bagram detention center near Kabul shows repeated incidents of maltreatment and has echoes of the scandal surrounding the abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

"Sometimes the torment seems to have been driven by little more than boredom, cruelty, or both," the report said.

Over two years later, only seven soldiers have been charged, including four last week, but no one has been convicted in either death.

Most of those who could still face legal action have denied wrongdoing, either in statements to investigators or in comments to a reporter.

Dilawar, a 22-year-old Afghan taxi driver detained on suspicion of involvement in a rocket attack on a US military base in the southeastern province of Khost received over 100 blows to the legs and an autopsy found that the tissue in his legs had been pulverized.

"I've seen similar injuries in an individual run over by a bus," Lt. Col. Elizabeth Rouse, a coroner and a major at the time said in the classified US report, the Times said.

By the time Dilawar underwent his final investigations, interrogators believed he was innocent, the report added.

Dilawar's torture and subsequent death in December 2002 echoed that of another Afghan, Habibullah, who died of a heart attack six days earlier. The report said it was likely to have been caused by a blood clot produced by repeated blows to the legs.

An investigation into abuse of detainees in US military custody in Afghanistan conducted by General Charles H. Jacobi in 2004 remains classified, although US military spokespersons insist that prisoners at Bagram, the main US detention facility in Afghanistan, are now being treated humanely.

A US military spokesperson contacted by AFP had no comment to make on the report Friday. *AFP*

Scientists clone stem cells from human patients

By Maggie Fox

WASHINGTON—South Korean scientists who cloned the first human embryo to use for research said on Thursday they have used the same technology to create batches of embryonic stem cells from nine patients.

Their study fulfills one of the basic promises of using cloning technology in stem cell research—that a piece of skin could be taken from a patient and used to grow the stem cells.

Researchers believe the cells could one day be trained to provide tailored tissue and organ transplants to cure juvenile diabetes, Parkinson's disease and even to repair severed spinal cords. Unlike so-called adult stem cells, embryonic stem cells have the potential from the beginning to form any cell or tissue in the body.

Woo Suk Hwang and colleagues at Seoul National University report their process is much more efficient than they hoped, and yielded 11 stem cell batches, called lines, from six adults and three children with spinal cord injuries, juvenile diabetes and a rare immune disorder.

"This study shows that embryonic stem cells can be derived using nuclear transfer from patients with illness... regardless of sex or age," Hwang told reporters in a telephone briefing.

"I am amazed at how much they have accomplished in just a year and the amount, the quality and the rigorousness of their evidence," Dr. Gerald Schatten of the University of Pittsburgh, a stem cell expert who reviewed the study, said in a telephone interview.

While the patients whose cells were copied do not stand at this time to benefit, the researchers hope to study the cells to understand their conditions better.

They also say their method may be less controversial than other work with embryonic stem cells because, by their definition, a human embryo was never actually created.

The report, published in the journal Science, is certain to add to the growing US political controversy over the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.

Opponents say all such work is unethical and should be banned because human life begins at conception and should not be destroyed.

Hwang said his method differs from that first used to derive human embryonic stem cells in 1998 and he proposes using a new term for the cloned embryos—a "nuclear transfer construct."

"I think this construct is not an embryo," he said. "There is no fertilization in our process. We use nuclear transfer technology. I can say this result is not an embryo but a nuclear transfer construct."

The sheep Dolly, the first adult mammal cloned, was made using nuclear transfer, in which the nucleus is removed from an an egg cell, replaced with the nucleus of the animal or person to be cloned, and then fused. The egg begins dividing as if it had been fertilized and sometimes becomes an embryo.

HWANG

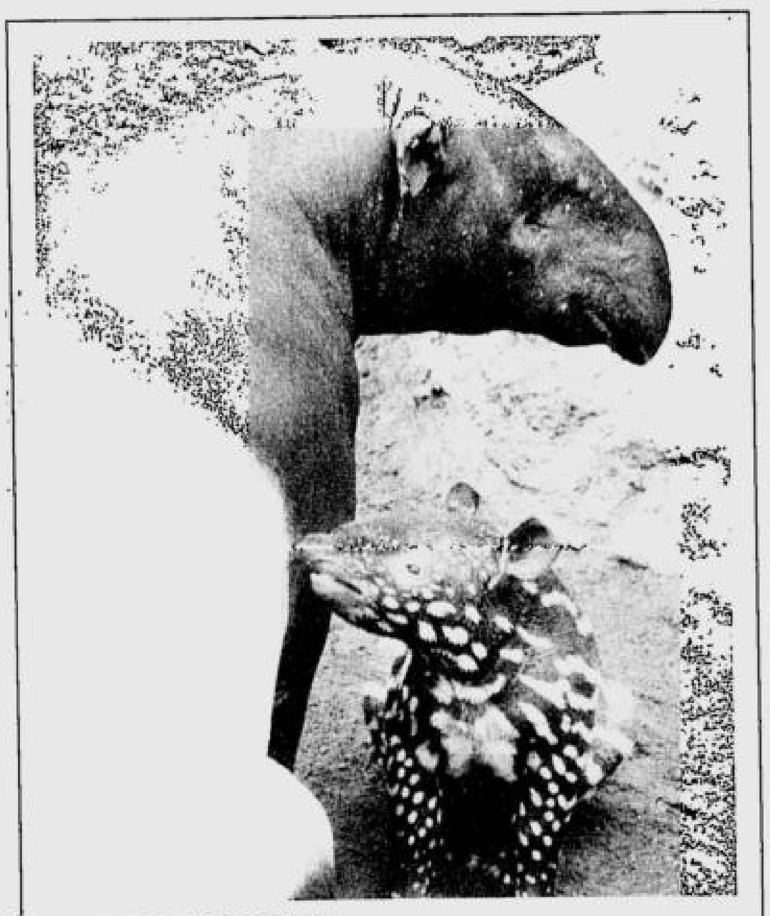
Cattle, pigs, sheep, cats and other animals have been cloned using this method.

Schatten said when scientists first got stem cells from human embryos in 1998, they broke open the little days-old ball of cells called a blastocyst.

In the current study, he said, they simply laid down the blastocyst in a lab dish filled with human "feeder cells."

David Magnus and Mildred Cho of the Stanford University Center for Biomedical Ethics in California agreed.

"There is no reason ever to believe one of these things could ever become a human being," said Magnus, who with Cho wrote a commentary on the work. *Reuters*


MOTHER AND CALF

A six-week-old female Malayan tapir calf stays close to her mother at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Neb., May 19. The calf was born with spots and stripes, and will assume her mother's coloration at about six months of age, according to the zoo. AP

Bin Laden is alive, Pakistan says

ISLAMABAD—Osama bin Laden is alive and on the run with a small band of fighters but his al-Qaida network has been paralyzed by Pakistani government forces, the country's foreign minister was quoted as saying Friday.

Foreign Minister Khursheed Kasuri declined to say whether Pakistan had specific information on the whereabouts of the world's most wanted fugitive, accused by the US of orchestrating the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington.

"Osama bin Laden is alive and moving around from place to place, but not with a large group of people," Kasuri was quoted as saying in the English-language newspaper The News.

Kasuri said that Pakistan's army had "paralyzed al-Qaida's communication network," and vastly reduced its capability to strike, according to the English-language newspaper The News.

Pakistan's intelligence service captured Abu Farraj al-Libbi, reputed to be al-Qaida's No. 3 leader, on May 2.

Al-Libbi—who remains in Pakistan's custody—was wanted for allegedly masterminding two December 2003 assassination attempts against President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who escaped unharmed. Seventeen other people were killed, however.

Pakistan, a key ally of the United States in its war on terror, has handed over more than 700 al-Qaida suspects to US officials, including al-Qaida's then-No. 3 Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who was arrested in March 2003 during a raid near Islamabad. *AP*

Pinochet suffers suspected stroke

SANTIAGO—Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, 89, suffered a suspected stroke and was rushed to hospital on Thursday, his staff said.

Pinochet was taken to an intensive care unit at the main Military Hospital in Santiago, Chile's chief of staff General Juan Emilio Cheyre said.

"He has improved and will go home after he is evaluated," according to a statement from Santiago's Military Hospital.

A Pinochet aide, Guillermo Garin, said his condition was not critical.

"The doctors diagnosed a transitory blood blockage," he said.

"It was a problem caused by diabetes." Pinochet, who faces criminal proceedings over the disappearance of opponents during his rule, was at his country residence at Los Boldos, 120 km southwest of Santiago, when he was taken ill. He was transferred to Santiago by helicopter.

His personal doctor suspected his fainting attack might have been a stroke, said Luis Cortes Villa, director of the Pinochet foundation.

"The doctor intelligently and opportunely ordered the transfer because he did not know if it was the start of a heart attack," Villa told reporters.

The ex-dictator's wife Lucia Hiriart and two of their five children, Augusto and Marco Antonio, were at the hospital. *AFP*

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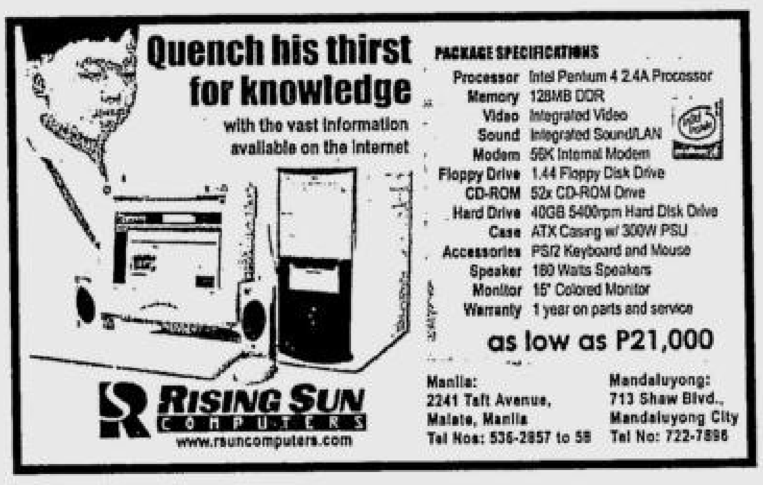
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Judge bars Larry King from testifying for Jackson

SANTA MARIA, California—The judge in Michael Jackson's child sex trial Thursday heard talk show host Larry King cast doubt on the motives of the accuser's mother, but dealt the defense a blow by barring his testimony.

Jackson's lawyers, who appear set to begin wrapping up their case, wanted King to tell jurors about comments allegedly made to him by Larry Feldman, a lawyer who once represented the young accuser's mother.

But after hearing King out of earshot of the jurors, trial Judge Rodney Melville told Jackson's lawyers he would not allow the TV celebrity to pass on details of the conversation that cast doubt on the woman's motives for accusing the pop singer.

"At this point I don't see any reason to call Mr. King to testify," the judge ruled, explaining that the account of the conversation the 71-year-old television talk show host had with Feldman was irrelevant.

King recalled Feldman telling him that he believed the feisty mother of Jackson's now 15-year-old alleged molestation victim was out to wring cash out of the superstar.

"He just said she is a wacko," King told the judge of the conversation that took place at a breakfast in Los Angeles in 2004. "He said she is in it for the money."

The defense, which has painted the accuser's mother as a "professional plaintiff" who made up the allegations against Jackson in a bid to extort him, had wanted to impeach Feldman's earlier testimony at Jackson's trial.

Feldman had denied making statements to King and others about the mother, but the judge said the talk show host's testimony would not be sufficient to impeach the lawyer.

The defense maintains that the alleged victim's family accused Jackson only after meeting Feldman, who had earlier brokered a settlement worth more than $20 million for a teenager who claimed the singer abused him in 1993.

Melville also disallowed similar testimony by publisher Michael Viner about the conversation at the breakfast meeting.

Viner recalled Feldman saying of the mother "her motives were financial." Legal analysts said the judge's decision was a setback for the defense.

"They would love to have had those witnesses say the mother was out for the money," said former prosecutor Laurie Levenson.

Jackson has denied fondling the then 13-year cancer patient in February or March 2003, plying him with alcohol to seduce him and holding the boy and his family prisoner to keep them from talking about any alleged abuse.

The defense team Thursday showed jurors a video of Jackson's fantasy-themed Neverland ranch.

The 19-minute video shows the estate's children-oriented attractions, including a zoo, a miniature train and an amusement park, as well as paintings of Jackson surrounded by smiling children of all races.

Legal analysts said the defense wanted to portray Jackson's innocent love of children.

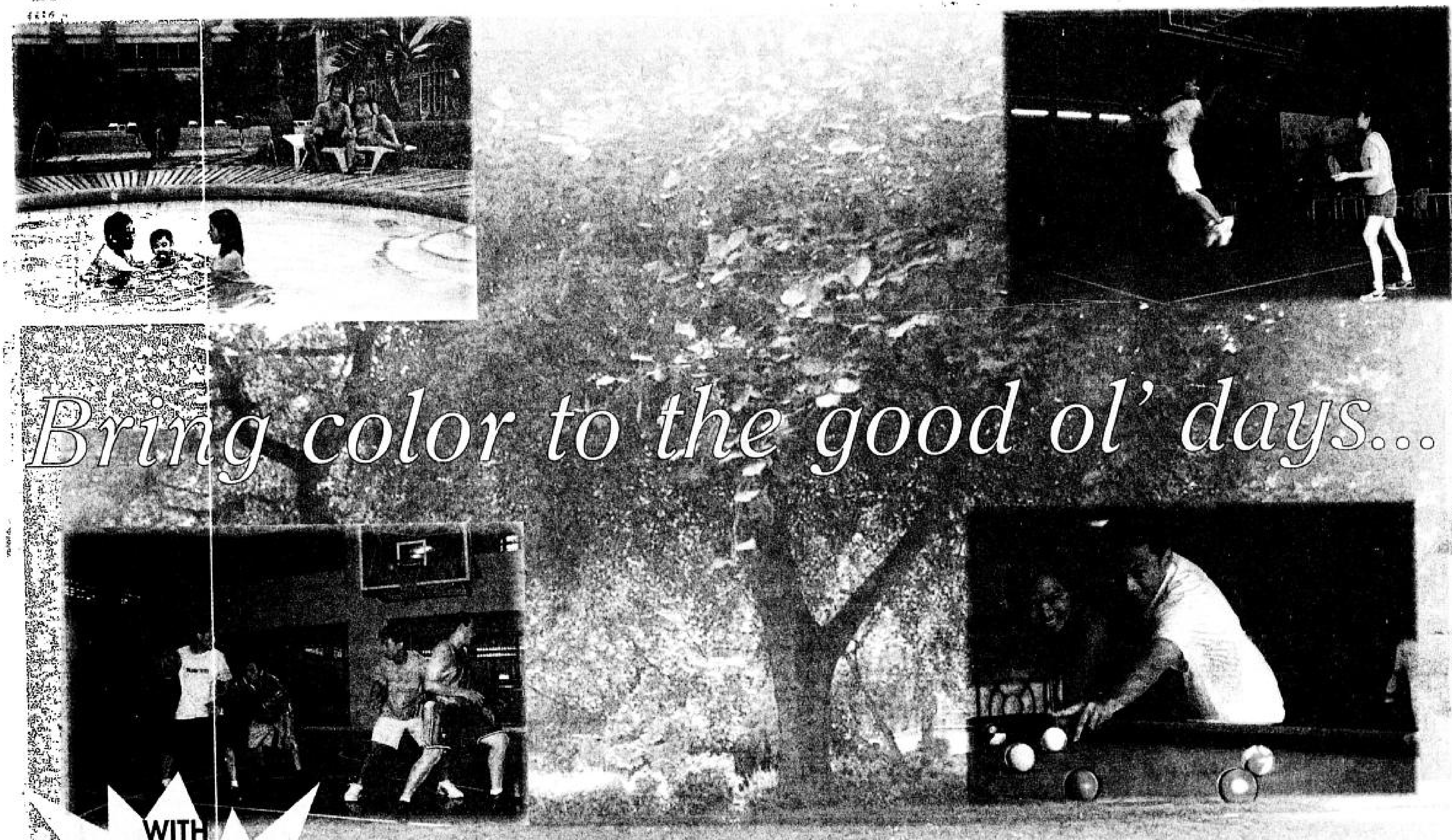
But Levenson said outside the courtroom that showing the footage was a risky decision by the defense. "Some jurors may feel only a pedophile would have paintings of himself as the Pied Piper surrounded by children."

She also said it appeared increasingly unlikely that Jackson would testify in his own defense, amid indications his lawyers were ready to begin winding up their case sooner than expected after dramatically reducing the number of witnesses they intend to call.

NBC and ABC news quoted sources close to the trial as saying the case could be sent to the jury by the first week of June.

The Jackson camp had indicated earlier that it would rest its case by late June, but attorney Thomas Mesereau has suggested it could be earlier than that. *AFP*

KING



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US expands visa program r foreign seasonal workers

INGTON—Under pressure from ess to expand the number of for- workers allowed in the United , immigration officials will begin ting visa applications for returning nal workers next week.

ne approvals could take up to 90 which would create problems for of the summer tourism industry.

avoid the delay, business own- from restaurateurs on Mas- setts' Cape Cod to crabbers in land, said they will probably $1,000 (euro791)-per-worker r expedited reviews, to get ap- ls in about two weeks.

s going to get everybody writing checks, because they don't have ption," said Wendy Northcross, executive officer for the Cape Cod ber of Commerce. "They have to, want to get the workers here in enough turnaround time."

ris Bentley, spokesperson for US nship and Immigration Services, he agency is ready for an expect- lux of thousands of applications. e will work through them as quick- we can, but we need to maintain the integrity of the process," he said.

Prodded by merchants and industry leaders who found themselves shut out of the H2B visa program this year, members of Congress pushed through the legislation as part of an Iraq spending bill. President George W. Bush signed it into law last week.

The H2B visa program reached its cap of 66,000 workers in January, leaving many companies without workers because they can't apply for the visas until 120 days before the employees are needed. The new law exempted from the cap foreign workers who have been hired in previous years, and it gave the immigration service two weeks to set up new guidelines and begin taking applications.

Congressional staff said they have been told by immigration officials that the goal is to process the applications in 60 days.

Bill Sieling, executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Seafood Industries Association, which includes about 70 businesses, said seafood companies usually hire about 1,000 workers to harvest crabs and oysters and have been able to fill only a few hundred of their jobs. *AP*

Uzbek president rejects demands for probe of massacre of protesters

QORASUV, Uzbekistan—The president of Uzbekistan on Thursday opposed an international investigation into an outbreak of violent unrest in his country while his troops retook control of a town close to the scene of bloody clashes in which witnesses said 500 people died.

Interior ministry troops met little resistance when they rolled into the town of Qorasuv, which lies on the border with Kyrgyzstan, after days of unrest in nearby Andizhan.

Qorasuv, a small town of about 25,000, has seethed with unrest since last Saturday when about 200 people rebelled and destroyed a local police headquarters.

The unrest came a day after bloodshed in Andizhan when troops opened fire on rebels and protesters and, witnesses said, killed 500 people. The government says 169 people died in the May 13 violence, most of them "bandits."

The violence in the tightly controlled Central Asian state, used as a staging area for the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, has led to expressions of concern from the West and from Washington.

It has stoked opposition fears that it could be used as a pretext for a new countrywide crackdown on independent voices.

At least 10 protesters were detained during a small antigovernment rally on Thursday in the capital Tashkent—just days after the revolt in the town of Andizhan.

"I fear that they could come up with something to link us to the (rebellion)," said Dilorom Itskhakova of the ERK party, whose exiled leader was sentenced in absentia to more than 15 years in jail for involvement in a string of bombings in 1999.

"I just don't know what's going to happen to us next."

The unrest was sparked by the trial of Muslim businessmen and blamed by hard-line President Islam Karimov on Islamic extremists.

Karimov told UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on Thursday that he was not in favor of a UN human rights probe into the violence, a senior UN official said.

Louise Arbour, the UN high commissioner for human rights, wants Uzbekistan to allow an independent international inquiry into reports of killings by security forces in Andizhan.

But Karimov "was not open to an international investigation this time," the UN official said.

"At this stage the response is not very promising." Arbour told the BBC from Geneva, but she hoped Karimov could be persuaded to change his mind.

Nato joined calls for an investigation, saying it was worried about the bloodshed and would like to see free access to the region.

"It should be investigated, Nato is disturbed... very worried about the situation and we will take our position as it further develops," Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the alliance's secretary general, told Reuters on the sidelines of a conference in Switzerland.

Uzbekistan cooperates with Natothrough its participation in the Partnership for Peace program, a first stage toward possible Nato entry.

The government of Uzbekistan has taken foreign diplomats to Andizhan but has not shown them the site of the killings. *Reuters*

TURKS & CA
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N'T STARE TOO MUCH, BERT, YOU MIGHT GO BLIND
Universe contestants from Turks and Caicos, Uruguay, USA, Virgin Islands, United Kingdom and Ukraine frolic on the beach during a shoot at Dusit Laguna Resort in Phuket, Thailand May 19. The 54th annual Miss Universe competition will take place in Bangkok, Thailand on May 31. AP

Canadian gov't wins confidence motion by 1 vote

OTTAWA—Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin's minority Liberal government narrowly won a confidence vote Thursday night, by one vote, after weeks of political turmoil. The deciding vote was cast by the speaker of the House in favor of the government, breaking a tie, resulting in 153 to 152 votes in support of the government's budget.

The vote followed weeks of political drama that had pitted the Liberals, accused of corruption, against opposition lawmakers eager for a chance to govern. Its outcome promises an uneasy truce between the country's political parties over the summer.

"The government respects the fact that the margin of tonight's vote was very narrow. Indeed that is an understatement, (but) we must move forward now in a spirit of cooperation," Paul Martin told parliament immediately following the vote.

The confidence vote was the first test of support for a Canadian minority government since 1979 when former Prime Minister Joe Clark's Conservative government fell, also on a budget vote, only six months after being elected.

Had the vote not gone in the government's favor, it would have triggered a summer election that few Canadians wanted and might have unintentionally emboldened Quebec separatists.

"This was not just a budget vote. It was about a vision of Canada. It was about a perspective of the country," Martin told his caucus.

To secure the win, the prime minister recruited billionaire auto parts heiress and rookie Conservative politician Belinda Stronach only days before the vote. *AFP*

honor Uncle Sam, nericans buy Chinese

phen Collinson

NGTON—Need a plastic White How about an "I love Washing- veatshirt or a Stars and Stripes car? Well, thanks to communist you won't break the bank.

Vashington simmers over trade rrency spats with Beijing—poli- rs need not stray far to test a's addiction to the fruits of Chi- at economic leap forward.

more than a flick of a patriotic from the White House is a cor- of tourist kitsch, at knock- prices courtesy of low-wage s halfway across the globe.

ists can choose a "President of ted States" baseball cap, with a official seal across the good value at $12.

lump for a pewter-style hand- tue of Abe Lincoln or a model of Capitol for eight dollars.

more ironic is the seven buck f one of the quintessential mo- f American mythology, the rais- the US flag by marines at the War II battle of Iwo Jima.

ne of the most patriotic nations h, each of these pieces bears a in China" sticker on its base.

given that according to latest s, Washington hosted 16.4 million c visitors in 2003 compared with million foreigners—most of them g snapped up by Americans.

a few garments have a "Made USA" label, and some of those oven in the Dominican Republic nerican material.

ly anyone is priced out of the : a disheveled homeless man pa- e streets in an "FBI" shirt, made nam, and a matching woolly hat. y with the flow of affordable many Americans are relaxed over their point of origin.

Marilyn Beatty, from Northern Virginia, says her out-of-town visitors love the tourist stalls dotted around downtown Washington.

"I use them a lot, a real lot, I just like that it's cheap," she shrugged, when asked whether she is concerned that most stalls hold goods from China, Vietnam, Taiwan or the Dominican Republic.

"A lot of the stuff in Wal-Mart and Target comes from China," she said, referring to cut price megastores, which hawk everything from baby clothes to baseball bats and books to barbecues.

Judging by crammed store aisles at weekends, half of America is in on this Faustian pact.

Customers have saved billions of dollars and pumped up consumption over the last decade, fuelling growth, creating retail jobs and empowering a commerce lobby, which shepherded trade pacts with Vietnam and China through Congress.

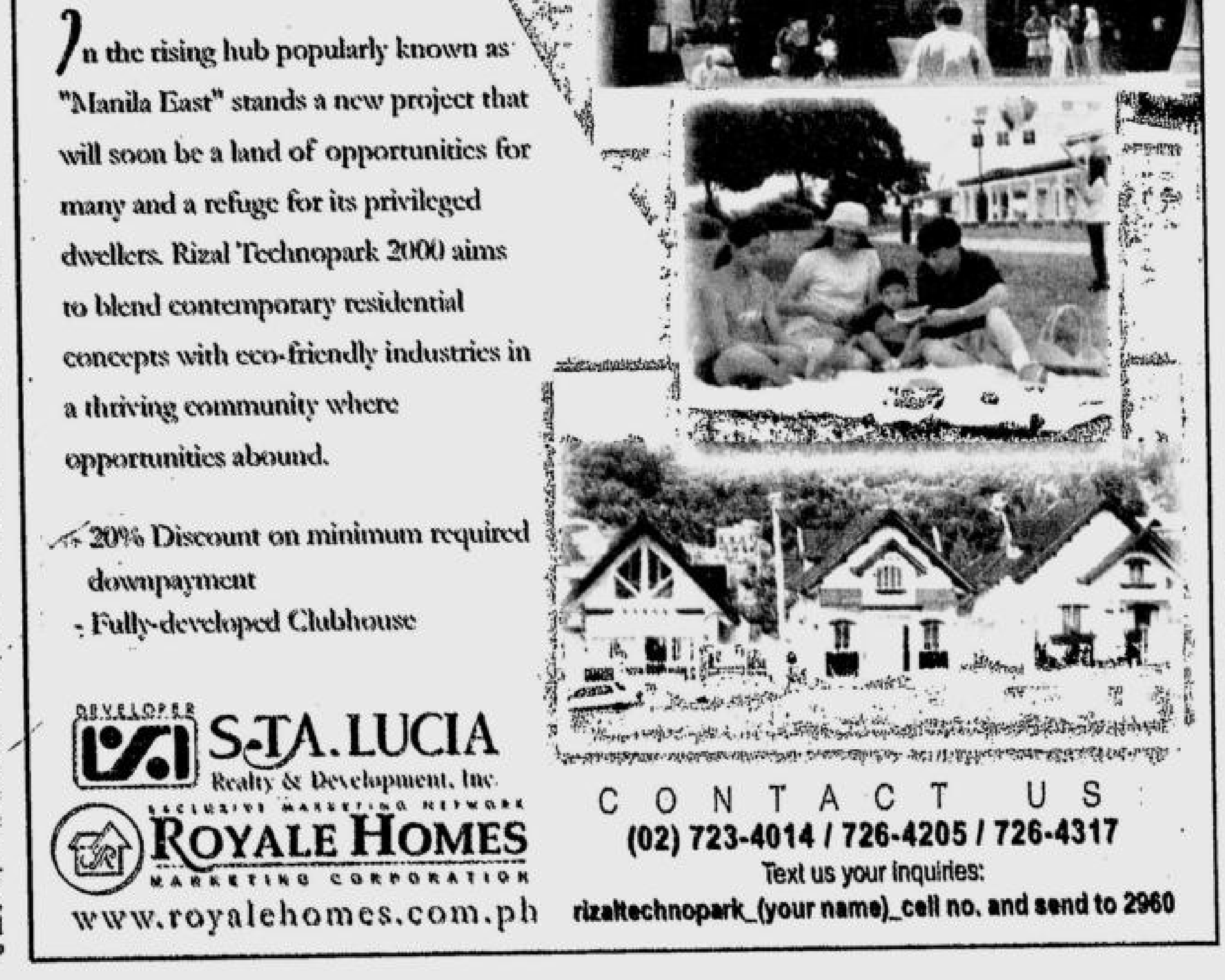
That's little compensation though for a production line worker in Detroit or a textiles laborer in South Carolina whose jobs migrated offshore.

US textile firms, which have already declined to 600,000 employees, could stand to lose another half million jobs following the removal of a worldwide textile quota system this year, union officials say.

US Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez Tuesday introduced new safeguards on four new categories of Chinese textile exports permitted under World Trade Organization rules.

But right outside the windows of his commerce department, tourists leafed through piles of Chinese, and Asian-made shirts, on a stall that also features "Made in China" Saddam Hussein playing cards.

Days after Washington rebuked China for a "highly distortionary" currency system, tourists could celebrate with a 100-dollar-bill mug, fired in Chinese kilns priced $4. *AFP*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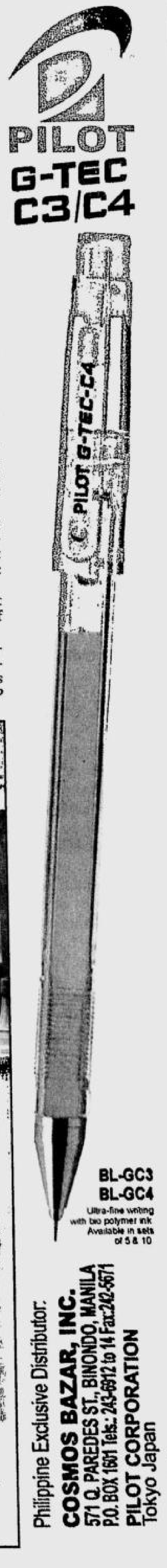
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OPINION

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Out of the shadows

EDITORIAL

THE JUETENG scandal has moved out of the shadows of rumor mongering to a formal Senate inquiry into allegations that First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and his son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, have received protection money from jueteng operators.

The shift of venue came after Sen. Panfilo Lacson brought the case to the joint inquiry of the Senate committees on games, where he said he would present "very explosive testimony" and witnesses who would give evidence on people in "high places" linked to jueteng payoffs.

For the first time since the scandal broke out several weeks ago, Lacson named President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband and their son Mikey Arroyo as alleged recipients of jueteng money, but he has refrained from linking Ms Arroyo directly to the scandal. Father and son have denied involvement in the jueteng payoff and have described the allegations as "fabrications."

While Lacson is taking advantage of his legislative immunity in making the disclosures, the transfer of the case to the Senate offers an opportunity for a public inquiry in an official forum during which the credibility of the witnesses and evidence can be scrutinized and tested, within the framework of due process. Prior to the shift, the scandal had taken on the character of a witch-hunt in which many people, including unnamed senior police officials and even priests, were tarred with broad brush strokes of alleged involvement in the payoff. "White papers" on persons alleged to be on the take have been submitted to some members of Congress. Unless these accusations are substantiated in an orderly process of inquiry, where the accused can defend themselves and have the opportunity to confront their accusers, the allegations will neither establish the payoff nor allow the authorities to get to the bottom of the continued operation of the illegal numbers game.

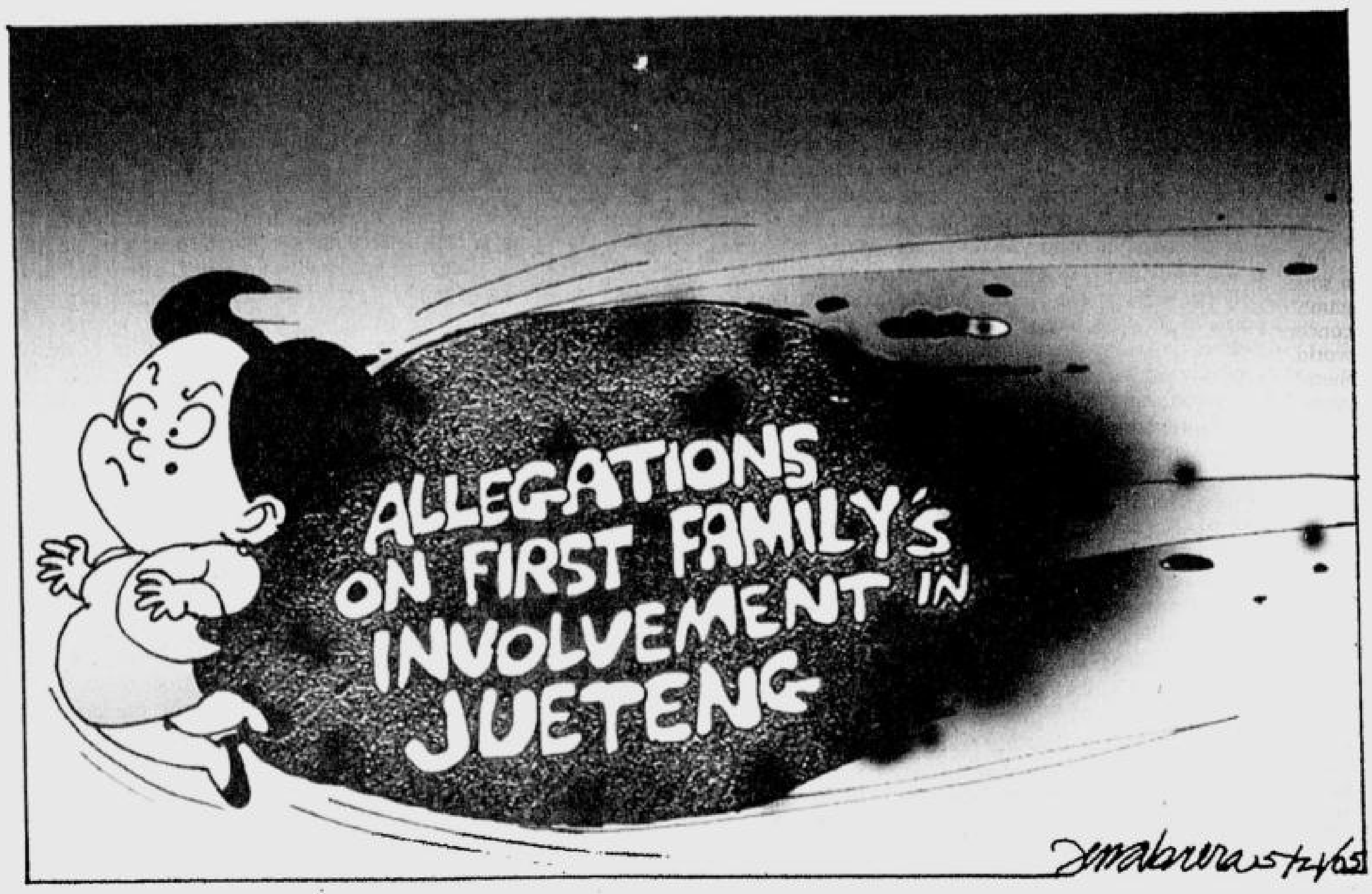
The inquiry is being justified as a process "in aid of legislation" seeking to eradicate this form of illegal gambling, but the inquiry can also be transformed into an effort to link the President directly to the payoff and uncover evidence which could be used as a basis for starting an impeachment charge against her. At present, the targets of the allegations are peripheral: the President's closest relatives. Whatever evidence and witnesses Lacson has lined up for the Senate inquiry—and we can't prejudge the weight of the evidence on the basis of disclosures he has already aired in public—he is under pressure to present a strong case, otherwise the inquiry would amount to nothing more than a demolition job designed to drive the President out of office before her term ends.

As much as the public loathes corruption involving high officials and their relatives, the campaign against corruption cannot be won by a witch-hunt or a smear campaign. The larger issue in this inquiry is whether we can combat corruption within the framework of due process in the legislature. In this inquiry, we are testing whether our framework of due process is adequate to eradicate corruption which is hampering good governance.

The Senate has been used a few times in the recent past as a forum to flush out corruption. The most recent case where this forum led to the production of a well-substantiated case was the privilege speech of then Sen. Teofisto Guingona accusing President Joseph Estrada of receiving payoffs from jueteng lords, based on evidence disclosed by former Ilocos Sur Governor Luis "Chavit" Singson. The Singson exposé set in train the impeachment proceedings against Estrada.

Lacson is challenged to do as good a job as Singson did in 1999 in presenting a strong case of corruption against close presidential relatives. While the earlier jueteng scandal sparked the chain of events that led to the fall of Estrada, it does not automatically follow that another jueteng scandal would bring down the Arroyo administration. It will take more than that to summon the crowds that will launch another people power uprising.

In 2003, Lacson used the Senate investigation to make a case of corruption in the Jose Pidal account targeting the First Gentleman. He failed to build a case that was damaging enough to stop the election of Ms Arroyo in 2004. This time, Lacson has to do much better than in the Jose Pidal case.


ALLEGATIONS ON FIRST FAMILY'S INVOLVEMENT IN JUETENG

The second most corrupt

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

IT'S a sign of our times that when the government announces a project of considerable expense, suspicion immediately fastens on the officials who have proposed or are implementing it. Kickbacks are automatically assumed, more often than not, correctly. Public opinion has been so conditioned to accept that graft is an essential vice of every official transaction involving the expenditure of public funds.

That is why there was little wounded protest, albeit much admission and embarrassment, over the Philippines being ranked next only to Indonesia as the most corrupt country in Southeast Asia. The sad fact is that we were not always thus humiliated for we were regarded as an honest and respectable nation in more honorable times. But not any more.

Corruption has not only lowered our reputation in the international community but also increased the upkeep of government. The prevalence of graft in many of our public works contracts has increased their cost beyond the original price to the prejudice of the innocent taxpayers. It is well known that legislators earn millions of pesos in payoffs from projects they choose for their pork barrel allocations. And that is only the beginning. There will be more opportunities for "gratitude money" while the project is in progress and until it is finally accomplished.

The original estimated cost of only P600 million for the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant in 1975 increased to P2.3 billion when it was completed in 1985, allegedly because of bribes paid to certain identified individuals including Ferdinand Marcos himself. The defunct Public Estates Authority has yet to explain the tremendous expense incurred in the construction of the Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in Parañaque, not to mention the PEA-Amari reclamation project earlier exposed.

There is the scandal in the Department of Public Works and Highways where millions of pesos were spent for the daily ghost repairs of its vehicles which must have been of such inferior quality that they should not have been purchased at all in the first place. This is only one of the many offices in the government saddled with the corruption that now tarnishes and may eventually destroy the Republic of the Philippines.

The recent revelation of the incredible perquisites enjoyed by the former president of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund demonstrates how pecuniary gluttony can so ravish the public coffers to satisfy personal depravity.

The abuses are so mind-boggling as to overwhelm the pure in heart with their cynicism and cold-bloodedness. Among them are a P2.2-million Nissan Patrol to supplement 2 Mitsubishi Pajeros, foreign air fare of P2 million for him and his wife, 8 travels to the United States and Europe that cost P6 million, excessive official per diems higher by $300 than the standard amount, a monthly allowance of P25,000 for gas consumption, P960,000 for membership fees, food and drinks in golf and country clubs, and other extravagances.

The excuse given by Rolando A. Golez, whose resignation was speedily accepted by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, is that all the perquisites he exploited were "part of his compensation package" that made all his excesses hunky-dory. It probably did not occur to him that they were immoral and disgusting, or if they did, so what? Decades before, a high government official subordinated public interest to political gain when he scornfully declared, "What are we in power for?" The unrepentant Golez, when pangs of conscience protested, if they did at all, must have also sniffed in self-justification, "What am I in office for?"

There are those who say that President Arroyo must have known of her appointee's abuses but did nothing to discipline him. Others would go so far as to say that Golez was untouchable as one of her favored protégés, as he was known to often boast. The employees under him had protested his abuses, but were largely ignored, being mere employees and anonymous at that. It was left to Haydee Yorac, ever conscientious and never afraid, to give voice to their complaints so that Malacañang finally had to hear them.

It is gratifying that the investigation of Golez will reportedly continue notwithstanding his resignation. The fact that a person has left the public service should not operate to absolve him of offenses committed while in office. The investigation of Gen. Angelo Reyes' alleged mansion in Fort Bonifacio was discontinued when he resigned as defense secretary, but it has not been resumed although he is back in the Cabinet. Such a convenient de facto exoneration should not apply to Golez (or Reyes either) and others charged with misuse of public funds for private advantage.

I once had an amiable conversation in Hong Kong with an American lady who turned suddenly hostile when she learned I was from the Philippines. She recalled an unpleasant experience with our customs authorities and practically accused all of us Filipinos of dishonesty. I retorted huffily that we learned our corruption from her country, but looking back, I feel I may have misstated the case. Right now, truth to tell, it is we who could be teaching the Americans.

Dear Pope, surprise us

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

NOW that the excitement over the election of Pope Benedict XVI has died down, maybe we can look at the burning issues more coolly and calmly.

And what are the issues? In no particular order, they are: homosexuality and gay marriage, the role of women in the Church and ordination of women priests, priestly celibacy and married priests, reproductive issues especially birth control and contraception, abortion, euthanasia, marriage and divorce.

On these issues have we considerably judged Pope John Paul II and are likewise all set to judge Pope Benedict XVI. On these issues, too, have we labeled people as conservatives or liberals. And on these issues is the Church's solid front revealing cracks.

Also making news are other pressing issues, equally important, but they don't hit daily life as viscerally as the "life" issues above. For the record they are: ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, the Church's social agenda especially poverty, bioethics like stem cell research, the "priesthood of the laity" still held at bay despite diminishing priests and nuns, Church fall-out and disenchantment, "interiority and prayer."

One can even include the institutional Church itself as an issue, or to use the activist phrase as "part of the problem," as for example, its exceedingly centralized governance and hierarchical "pomp and circumstance," irreconcilable with the simplicity and poverty of Jesus. Picture the College of Cardinals in full regalia and the Apostles, together. Picture the Pope ceremoniously cloaked for installation and Jesus, together.

Hostile reactions arise from the Church's position that her judgments on the hot issues are "absolute truths," a favorite phrase, by the way, of past and the present pontificate. The harsh ring of "absolute" admits no change. And so, seeking change is consigned to "relativism."

Now comes the question. Are all those "absolute truths" really cast in stone? Apart from the "mysteries of our faith" like the Incarnation, the Divinity of Christ, the Blessed Trinity, the Eucharist, the Resurrection and Ascension, etc., which are untouchable and non-negotiable and upon which Christianity, especially Catholic Christianity rests and for which we are gifted from above and make a "leap of faith," many " beliefs" can and should stand scrutiny and review.

It might help to look at how "beliefs" come into being. Faith will perforce "seek understanding." This is what Theology is all about, and Theology results in "beliefs." Down the ages, the Church has had "thousands of beliefs" expressed in letters, encyclicals, exhortations, catechisms, pronouncements, devotions, etc. Some beliefs have been raised to dogmas, doctrines or solemn practices in liturgy. Some endure and some fade away; some are right, some proven wrong; some conclusive, some conjectural.

Unfortunately, the Church, well known for dogmatism, treats all of the above, including her rules and regulations, like absolute truths, plainly imposed or subtly suggested, often "under pain of sin," the better to keep the faithful, faithful. Thus preached, retracting or correcting takes years or ages, or not at all.

Look around. The Church has back-tracked on suicide, salvation outside the Church, chewing or touching the host, indulgences, declaring and "undeclaring" saints, excommunication, calling "unbelievers" pagans and infidels, the "Noli" and "Fili" in the Index. Even the Bible was under wraps. She has changed days of obligation, fasting and abstinence rules. She has apologized for the treatment of women, the Crusades, Galileo, forced conversion of conquered peoples. Once upon a time, these too were cast in stone.

But good news: *Semper reformanda* (reform always). Theology is in a continual "sorting out process" which is "never finished," constantly "evaluating and reevaluating our beliefs," especially when the Church is in crisis as it most emphatically is now. "A theologian... has a responsibility to subject every doctrinal pronouncement to critical scrutiny." Moreover "theology retains its critical function even when...beliefs become official."

Going back to today's burning issues, while abortion and euthanasia are out, the history and the basis for celibacy and women's role in the Church could be reexamined. Might they not have been just long-standing, customary practices where subsequent man-made laws can be revised? The very delicate moral and biological issues behind birth control and divorce can be turned inside out. Squarely face and just try to resolve the very complicated, almost inextricable ethical and physical situations that TV programs and your separated son or daughter presents. "Praying together" is not all it takes. And I wonder how the Church will grapple with homosexuality, considering...

My heart is warming up to Benedict XVI, an "intellectual heavy" who plays the piano—a promising combination there—level-headed enough to discern what is from the Spirit and what is not; "The Spirit's role should be understood in a much more elastic sense...not in the sense that the Holy Spirit picks out the Pope....Probably the only assurance he offers is that the thing cannot be totally ruined." Or, as he has been paraphrased, "The Church may zig and zag, but...the Spirit will not allow it to go under."

We are still Pope-watching. Protecting the "Doctrine of the Faith" can be done not only by "closing the books" but by "opening them" again and again. Dear Pope, surprise us.

Asuncion David Maramba is a retired professor, book editor and occasional journalist. Comments to marda@info.com.ph; fax 8210659

An African safari

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

KRUGER National Park, South Africa—We traveled four hours from Johannesburg to Nelspruit, the town nearest to Kruger National Park, to pick up supplies for our three-night stay here. It has been two weeks since we arrived in South Africa and we have moved a lot by rented car from the Western Cape to Johannesburg, breaking up our journey at several places. The drive along the Atlantic coast and then the Indian Ocean was splendid. It also gave us an idea of just how large South Africa is. It is said that the country is bigger than Germany, France and Italy put together. The Kruger National Park itself, which covers 20,000 sq km, is bigger than Israel.

* * *

Any trip to South Africa has for its high point a safari in Kruger, one of the world's greatest game reserves. It boasts of one of the biggest concentrations of wild animals anywhere in the world. Its "big five" are the lion (about 2,000 of them), the African buffalo (over 25,150 three years ago), the elephant (10,500 over three years ago), the rhinoceros (5,000) and the leopard (1,000). It has a tally of 520 bird species, 119 reptile species and 147 mammal species.

But more important, Kruger is a tribute to what three dynamic people did to make a dream a reality, as well as set up standards that have made it a favorite safari destination for peoples around the world. It could also serve as a model for environmental conservation even for our country, and we could learn a lot from the dedication and commitment of those who built it.

* * *

The park began as a vision in the mind of Paul Kruger, the Afrikaner (Dutch-descended) leader who was president from 1883 to 1902 of what was then known as the Transvaal Republic, before the formation of the Union. He was bothered by the fact that wild game in that part of the country was fast being decimated. Forbidding game hunting—unthinkable in those days—Kruger proclaimed the first conservation area, the old Pongola Reserve, and in March 1898 the 4,600 sq km Sabie Game Reserve, which became the nucleus of the present park. In 1926, a member of Parliament named Pieter Gant Wessel Gobler filed and shepherded a bill setting up the National Parks Bill and simultaneously proclaiming the area as the first national park.

It's said that when the British emerged victorious in the Anglo-Boer War against the independent Afrikaners in the north, Kruger's vision could have vanished. But as luck would have it, a British official, Lt. Col. James Stevenson-Hamilton, became warden of Sabie Reservation in 1902 and after the war ended also of the Shengwedzi Reservation. Later both sites were conserved and proclaimed as Kruger National Park. Stevenson-Hamilton steered and guided the park through its growing-up phase until his retirement in 1946.

* * *

Today more than a million people visit Kruger every year, half of them staying in 23 rest camps for several days in comfortable and reasonably priced lodges. The huge game reserve has to its north the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique and Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe. In May 2002, a formal agreement was signed to merge the three parks into the 35,000-sq km Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park. This is a wonderful idea as it means the animals can have a bigger romping ground.

But there are problems. Reports say that Zimbabwe's strongman Robert Mugabe tolerates the hunting and killing of animals that venture into his territory, for the simple reason that his nation is now in the throes of famine and he has to feed his people. That will definitely affect the fate of the wildlife in the part of Africa.

* * *

A safari is a totally new experience for our family, except for my son Buddy who has been here before. I had to be convinced to join, but now I can understand why. Unlike in the old days when people hunted and killed the animals, in Kruger one hunts and shoots but only with cameras, and from inside one's vehicle. (There are still places in Africa where governments authorize "culling" from their inventory, but one has to pay an enormous amount to be able to indulge in it.) Kruger has 3,000 km of roads over which one drives at a maximum of 50 kph, but one is absolutely prohibited from getting out of the vehicle. The rule is very specific: you can only lean out of your window with one arm holding a camera. One is also forbidden to venture out of the rest camp after 5:30 p.m. To ensure total protection from predators, all the camps have electric fences and the gates are heavily wired.

* * *

Unlike a zoo where one sees the animals in perpetual repose, in a game reservation they are in their natural habitat, amid other animals in "Africa's killing field." We arrived late Wednesday afternoon and the following morning, we ventured out by car before 6 a.m. to catch the early risers among the animals. We immediately ran into a small herd of elephants feeding on tree branches. African elephants are far bigger than those one sees in Asia. Impalas, surely among God's most beautifully designed animals, were all over the place, serving as prey to the most deadly predators. We ran into a group of giraffes whose adults were so tall they were feeding on the treetops. We then saw a couple of zebras, lots of baboons, and crocodiles and hippopotamus in the lake, but where was the superstar, the king? We drove around all day, and it was becoming quite frustrating. Then late in the afternoon, we spotted two of them, taking in some sun on top of a huge boulder. The female lion was lying down, but the male, with all his mane, sat majestically erect, as though surveying his kingdom. Later we also spotted a beautiful leopard at rest by the roadside—until the roar of a powerful car engine caused him to flee.

'Infant formula kills'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

UNICEF figures show that the average monthly cost of feeding one baby with infant formula is P4,000, not including the cost of bottles and nipples, the fuel expense entailed in boiling water and sterilizing the implements, as well as the hidden cost in health care.

In fact, Unicef says, a child is 25 more times as likely to die from diarrhea and four times more likely to die from pneumonia than a breast-fed infant, mainly because of infections caused by the use of unsafe water, improper or inadequate sterilization of bottles and nipples, and the mixed formula itself going bad. WHO estimates that 20 percent of infant deaths in the country can be traced to formula-feeding.

In the face of growing poverty, even the most loving and caring of parents would tend to cut corners. Thus, we see mothers and caregivers reducing the proportion of formula to the water, or using improper substitutes like condensed milk. Such shortcuts have life- and health-threatening implications, and will almost surely result in malnutrition.

Unicef estimates that 12 percent of infants below one-year-old and 32 percent of one-year-olds are underweight, almost surely the result of bottle-feeding.

The bottle-fed infant is disadvantaged well beyond infancy. "Formula-feeding retards children's cognitive ability and educational achievement," says Unicef. In various tests, formula-fed babies consistently scored lower in IQ and other standardized tests than breast-fed babies, with "the cognitive differences increasing with longer breastfeeding and persisting until late childhood." Bottle-fed babies also scored lower in reading comprehension, mathematical ability and overall scholastic ability than their breast-fed peers.

* * *

THESE facts and figures are already well-known. They were first publicized when Unicef and non-government organizations launched a breast-feeding campaign in the early 1980s. The campaign, in fact, resulted in the adoption of the Milk Code in 1986 that sought to control the unethical marketing practices of milk companies and promote breast-feeding.

Why trot out these dismaying statistics now? Because, decades after the passage of the Milk Code, the law has proven inadequate. The latest health data, in fact, show an alarming drop in the number of mothers who breast-feed. Not only are fewer mothers breast-feeding, those who do are breast-feeding for shorter periods. While both WHO and Unicef recommend at least six months' duration for exclusive breast-feeding (no formula or semi-solids in the mix) "for optimal infant growth, development and health," the average duration of exclusive breast-feeding among Filipino mothers is only 24 days, down from 1.4 months in 1998. Indeed, only 1.4 percent of babies six to seven months old are still exclusively breast-fed.

The persistent popularity of infant formula is a problem not just of young parents and babies but of the entire country. WHO estimates that Filipinos spend P43 billion a year to formula-feed their infants. And because of limited milk production in the Philippines, the country relies on milk imports to provide breast milk substitutes. The National Economic and Development Authority says the country spent P20.5 billion on milk imports from January to November last year.

* * *

THEN there are the "hidden costs" associated with bottle-feeding.

To safely bottle-feed, a family needs access to clean water and fuel for sterilization. Without these, bottle-feeding becomes life-threatening.

Then, because infectious illnesses are common among bottle-fed babies, their families have to spend more for doctor's consultations, medicines and hospitalization. WHO estimates that the cost of out-patient treatment for acute respiratory infections caused by formula-feeding comes to P55.7 million per year, while hospitalization costs total P26 million per year.

In addition, the infants' persistent health problems mean their parents will miss more working days, resulting in loss of income and productivity. WHO estimates that the total lost wages due to tending these children during their first six months is P1 billion.

And should the unthinkable but probable happen, funeral costs associated with the 16,000 child deaths due to formula-feeding and other inappropriate feeding practices totals P563 million a year.

Environmentalists might also be interested to know that formula-feeding produces huge amounts of waste—cans, cartons, old feeding bottles and rubber nipples. Aside from which, in rural areas where firewood is the main source of cooking fuel, the need to boil water puts pressure on rural families to cut down more and more trees to produce firewood.

* * *

WHO'S to blame for this dismaying turn of events? Sad to say, it's mainly the milk marketers who, with their advertising companies, conceive and produce all that warm, touchy-feely advertising featuring cuddly babies and toddlers in their parents' loving arms.

These images, in fact, constitute a violation of the Milk Code which prohibits the use of "any picture or text in informational and educational materials which may idealize the use of breastmilk substitutes." The same Code also prohibits the use of the health care system—public and private doctors, nurses, midwives, hospitals and clinics—to promote breastmilk substitutes. And yet, as a survey in 1997 showed, gifts for the personal use of health personnel have been given as inducements to promote the products of milk manufacturers.

Perhaps it's time for stronger language. Instead of merely promoting breastmilk—"breast is best"—it may now be time to say instead that "infant formula (or powdered milk) kills."

The original soda fountain

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

AFTER THE WAR when Makati was perhaps only a glimmer of an idea in the mind of Col. Joseph McMicking, there was the Escolta and Avenida, Rizal. This was where you went to buy your shoes of *charol* (patent leather) or plain leather and the other items needed for school. There was also the Lyric and Capitol Theaters whose architecture at the time was in no way a topic of discussion. Neither was the demolition of pre-war buildings a cause for worry since all of them were still in use.

Going "downtown" as it was then called was a special treat, especially drinking a chocolate ice-cream soda at Botica Boie, possibly the memorable first encounter with a soda fountain of most Filipino children. The pharmacy was actually an institution even then, but few may have known that it had been in existence since 1830.

The business was started by a Spaniard, Dr. Lorenzo Negrao, when the Philippines was allowed to trade with countries other than Spain. It took at least a year for supplies to arrive, so you can imagine what happened if a patient really needed a certain medicine. Herr Heinrich Schmidt took over the enterprise 20 years later together with another German pharmacist, Friedrich Steck, locally known as Don Federico. Friedrich bought out Heinrich seven years later and acquired as another famous landmark, Botica de Sta. Cruz, which was still doing business in Plaza Goiti before the war. Then he bought Botica Sto. Cristo, which was located at 348 Calle Sto. Cristo in Binondo, and Botica de Cebu.

Aware of the potential of the essence of *ilang-ilang*, Friedrich started distilling it for commercial use. His enterprise won the gold medal and highest awards at the expositions of Madrid in 1887 and St. Louis in 1904 under the trade mark of "Pablo Sartorius," his nephew's name. (The patent for *ilang-ilang* now belongs to YSL and it is sourced mainly from India.) It commanded the highest prices in the European market. A total of 2,504 kilos was exported in 1914.

Seeing the success of Steck, others came up with similar products but of inferior quality or produced even artificial oils, causing the market to falter. The market never recovered, especially since the places where *ilang-ilang* grew were converted into housing projects.

When Friedrich decided to return to Germany, he sold Botica Sta. Cruz to another pharmacist named Westhagen, who was married to Isabela Gonzales Tuason. Eventually his nephew, Paul Sartorius, whose main concern was the *ilang-ilang*, bought the business and its three branches from his aunt in 1870. They remained in his hands for 10 years before he too returned to Germany.

Earlier in 1864, Reinhold Boie, another German pharmacist (haven't figured out yet why there were so many German pharmacists running around here), was employed by another Escolta pharmacy owner, W. von Borris. After three years Boie was sent to Vigan, the center of the indigo industry, where he opened a pharmacy using his own name due to some requirements of the law. Thus, the name Botica Boie actually started in Vigan in 1867. Somewhere in the National Archives should be the original grant issued to Boie by Spanish Governor-General Gandara to operate the store.

After two years, Borris sold Botica Boie to Paul Sartorious while Reinhold Boie purchased Botica Sto. Cristo. Eight years later, Boie sold it to Adolfo Eidner and returned to Germany.

In the meantime, Pablo Sartorious became ill and asked Boie to come back and run the business.

In 1884, Boie in partnership with Otto Ziegert bought the business from the Sartorius family for P52,000. The name was changed to Boie & Siegert. Botica Boie, which started in Vigan 17 years earlier, was sold to Dr. Alexander Schadenberg who was more interested in studying the minorities in the area than in pharmaceuticals. He did research on the Aetas and his mounted Negrito skeleton was exhibited in the Museum of Amsterdam. He traveled to Mindanao, ascended Mt. Apo, becoming the first European to do so. It was he who discovered the giant flower christened Rafflesia Schadenbergaiana, which attains a diameter of 80 centimeters, an honor he didn't appreciate because of its stench.

When Siegert died while on a trip to Germany, Boie took in Dr. Schadenberg as a partner until 1896 when both of them died, one before the outbreak of the revolution and the other in the midst of it in September. Both were buried in the cemetery of San Pedro Makati.

When World War II broke out, all the Germans running Botica Boie were in trouble. The members of the staff were deported to the United States in 1918 along with other German residents. The business was sold for P1,250,000.

In 1922, Botica Boie bought A. S. Watson & Co., a branch of the Hong-Kong store which apparently had been doing business in Escolta from 1880 to 1912 and had a branch in Cebu. Aside from medicines, surgical and scientific instruments, they now sold flavoring extracts, floor wax, toilet articles etc.

For 86 years Boie used to be located at 81-87 Escolta where the Lyric Theater now stands. In 1916, it moved to 95 Escolta, running back to Calle San Vicente. The two-story building was remodeled and another two stories added in 1920.

In 1925, the San Vicente building was torn down and a five-story concrete building was erected on the site for office, laboratory and other departments.

Some time in the 1960s the venerable Botica Boie, an institution, closed its doors. Nobody seems to have mourned its passing.

Anything but Filipino

YOUNG BLOOD

Rogelio B. Cruz

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

THE CORRELATION between supposedly "upscale" environments and Filipinos who sound eerily foreign is astounding. I was reminded of this curious fact recently as I was having a nightcap with my friends in a popular coffee shop near one of the country's "better" schools. At one in the morning, I was buzzed into wakefulness even before I had had my caffeine by the man behind the counter.

"K'n'gt'yr-rdrshr?" he opened our transaction, challenging my guessing capabilities. Was that a Canadian or Californian accent? Maybe Texan? Or was he really trying to be more cosmopolitan a la Queer Eye For The Straight Guy? He slurred on, almost obliterating all his vowels, in an effort to create an effect (I couldn't help but think so) of fluency. "Yeahthutswunshertamurcannuh?" "Unwunkeppchinnuh?" "Unwdyalsolykabuttrscthchbor?" "Thatshallshr?" "Plssignhrshr?" "Thankyshr?"

I was too flabbergasted to access my English neurons and kept replying in Filipino. I had this feeling that it was I, not he, who was burdened with embarrassment. Indeed I ought to be ashamed: as I sat down to my drink, I drowned in the foam of conversation around me, that sounded like the whole gamut of cable TV shows from "MTV Pimp My Ride" to a CNN weather report.

That guy sure beat the other one I heard several weeks ago who said, "Kinna have wunnathis chew?" while ordering. It was probably what they call a New England accent, although I really wouldn't know. The *barista* was courteous enough to respond with her own version of Pennsylvania Dutch, although it was frustrating to see her unable to get beyond "uh-huh" and "yeah."

This phenomenon of neurolingual over-exertion, I believe, is symptomatic of a more general condition: some irresistible impulse to speak anything but Filipino in areas where the densities of imported beverages, designer labels, WiFi spots and Ford trucks are especially high. Do we think we ought to watch our language because we happen to be in the company of intelligent, well-educated, moneyed, morally upright persons?

The answer, of course, is yes. Filipino is not aspirational. Invent your own usage if you must—from "No no, don't don't, dirty that baby" to "Yo! I'm fine, wazzup to you too!" to "Till here only now dude, see ya"—but never, if you have any sense of socio-economic propriety in you, speak in a straight, unadulterated Pinoy. Throwing in a "shet" after every other sentence is the last resort in dire situations when one simply cannot translate any longer, but there are better alternatives, such as stalling fashionably with the generous use of "uhm," "like," "actually" and "you know" or speaking an entire sentence in one breath without pause and then stopping for a full minute to think before speaking again.

The top of class is to speak English like a foreigner, and conversely, speak Filipino like a foreigner. *Eh*, how did we end up this way *nga ba*? Whether popular culture is the cause or effect is a chicken-or-egg thing. A recent fastfood commercial featured an expat discussing her premium fine-dining-quality salad over candlelight with her date. Towards the end of the 30-second spot, we are mildly surprised when she exclaims something in Filipino, albeit with a thick American accent. It's all right to show you're having trouble speaking the national language. After all, it's romaine lettuce you're eating, not sweet spaghetti.

Is there any "premium," "AB," "prestigious" product marketed in Filipino? Is there any "premier" shopping mall with signage in Filipino? Is there a "credible," "intelligent," "educated" news program in Filipino? Is there a "hip" radio station in Filipino?

I observed to a friend how, whether in media interviews or "lifestyle" TV shows, we twist and squeeze our brain cells to extreme pain just to produce the right word in English with the right diction, adding that other nations don't have the same problem—they simply speak their own language.

My friend sneered at this, pointing out that their own language is the only language they know. And he was right.

And shouldn't I be shot now, because I've written this entire essay in English? My point is not the use of English in itself. My problem is the implicit put-down of our native sensibilities every time we choose to use English. Sure, the problem of a national language is complex for a nation like ours with so many dialects, but do we really speak English for national unity? We have two languages: one for "Please come in, we are happy to serve you" and another for "ANG BANGKONG ITO AY PROTEKTADO NG ALARMA." Filipino is not the language of progress, it is a criminal language, permitted only in select areas in universities conceptually, if not physically, far from the classroom, such as the cafeteria.

You would expect the "less fortunate" segments to take offense at this belief, but apparently they don't. I was once a trainer in a semiconductor company, and one of my most striking memories was a comment by the training supervisor regarding the materials I made for line managers. She said it would be better if I made them in English, because they were for managers. Filipino is reserved for the "uneducated" like her, who graduated from the School Of Hard Knocks.

Our leaders believe that mastery of the English language will catapult us back to our (allegedly) former status as Asia's most literate country and swing our economy back to the positive end of the scale. We love this notion too much, and dream of our children becoming the archetypal *kolehiyala* more than anything else.

Where on earth or beyond did we get our inspiration? From Korea which exiles hard-headed English students to us so we can teach them a *thang* or *chew*? From Japan which imposed a 50-year ban on Japanese before it became a world superpower? From Germany which requires its students to defend their theses in English? From the United States which was wise enough not to decree their own version of a Linggo Ng Wika?

In this age when the world more than ever values cultural diversity, only we Filipinos spend time to perfect our twangs. While every other nation strives to preserve its identity, we willingly—perhaps even proudly—throw our own language into the crematorium, hoping that the sacrifice will deliver us from economic hardship. It is high time we stopped to think very carefully if our language policy of auto-genocide is really going to bring us where we want to be.

Rogelio B. Cruz, 28, is an independent marketing research professional and a fictionist. His latest short stories were published in "Growing Up Filipino" and "Fastfood Fiction."

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Separate values education subject

YEARS after the successful four-day People Power Revolution, the Philippine educational system gave emphasis to values formation and development.

This was in the spirit of the original and authentic Edsa Revolution which, to the credit of peace-loving and well-intentioned Filipinos, became the model of other countries, especially those in Eastern Europe.

Together with the formal teaching of Values Education as a separate subject, the government launched the Moral Recovery Program. However, these twin moves were derailed by too much politics and lack of political will on the part of the nation's leaders.

In the school system, Values Education had been making inroads when—suddenly and saddeningly—the Department of Education scrapped it in school year 2002-2003 and made it just a component of the subject called *Makabayan*.

Unsupported by previous studies, the scheme was implemented nationwide without first piloting it to determine the wisdom—or the lack of it—of scrapping Values Education as an independent subject.

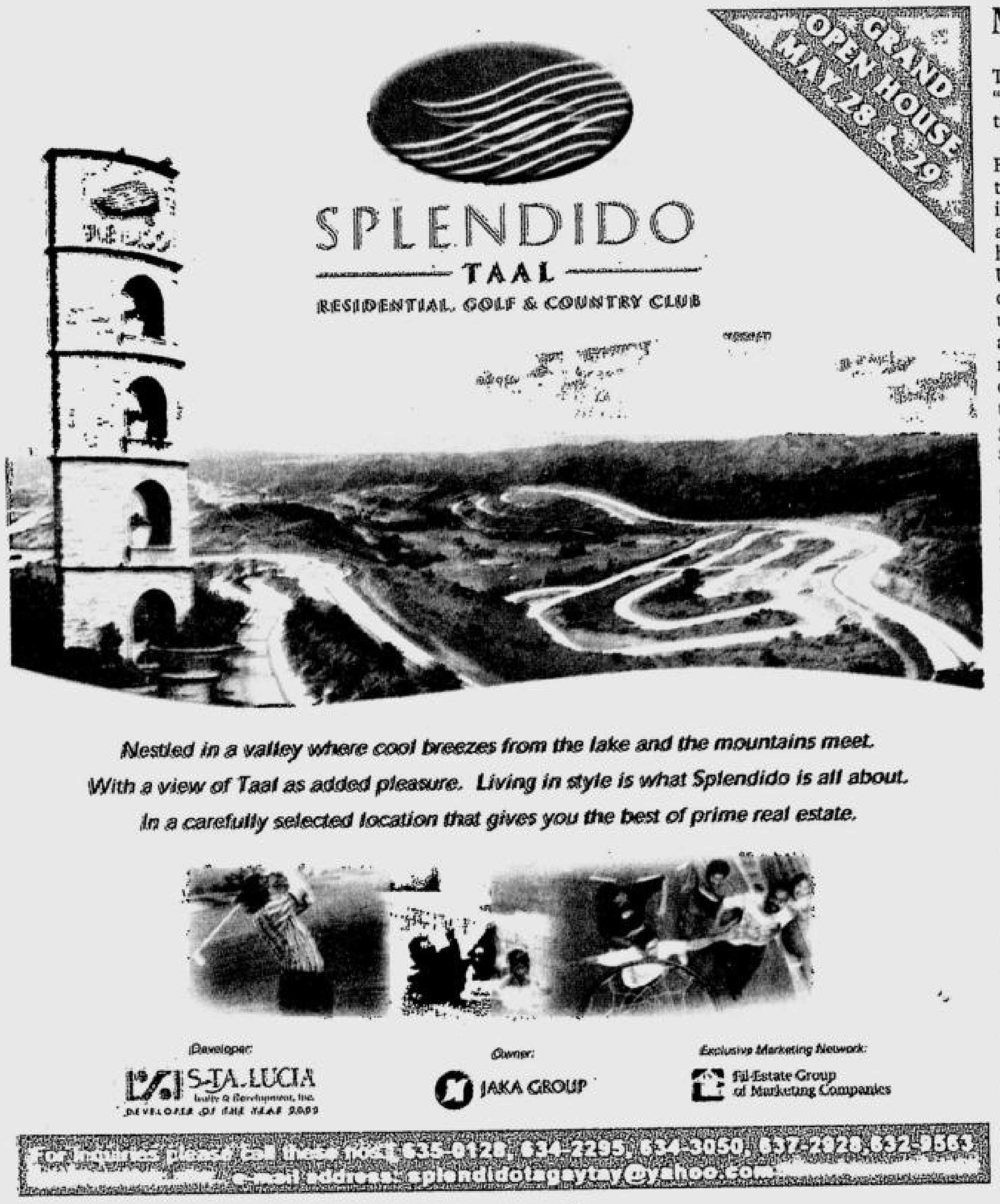
Now, the teachers—also known as grassroots educators, as they are in the forefront of various educational programs and projects—are feeling the adverse effects of the DepEd's move.

The so-called integration of Values Education in the five major subjects—Filipino, English, Math, Science and *Makabayan*—is easier said than done.

This is so because the teachers have to teach first the contents of the minimum learning competencies mandated by the DepEd and they find it quite difficult to integrate Values Education in the different subject areas. And sad to note, the DepEd had not prepared adequate and appropriate materials for this integration. And this is one big problem that confronts the teachers.

And we want to curb graft and corruption in this country? We should make Values Education a separate subject, as the first step toward building a solid and strong moral foundation among our people, especially the youth.

—EUSEBIO S. SAN DIEGO,
president,
Quezon City Public School Teachers Association Inc., Misamis Street,
Sto. Cristo, Bago Bantay, Quezon City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Militants wrong on PhilHealth cards

THIS is in reaction to a news item entitled "PhilHealth cards an election ploy, charge militants" (PDI, 5/9/05).

We wish to inform your readers that the Family Health Cards that PhilHealth distributed last year to almost four million Filipinos were part of a regular program to enable members of the less privileged sector to have access to quality medical care services. Until now, we continue distributing health cards together with the local government units (LGUs) who have found the program advantageous to their constituents. The enrollment of the health card recipients into our sponsored program was made possible through the joint resources of the national government, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) and the LGUs.

Like most insurance products, the Family Health Card coverage carries with it a validity period of one year, for a premium payment of P1,200 per enrolled family. It now falls on the lap of the local government units (LGUs) to renew the enrollment of the family beneficiaries. As such, we have been doing the rounds of LGUs nationwide to prod the local chief executives to reenrol their needy constituents and in the process, free themselves from periodic dole-outs for various medical situations.

The P530-M fund transferred by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to PhilHealth is the actuarially determined amount to finance the payment of claims of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) for a year. The rest of the Medicare fund remains with Owwa to fund a supplemental benefit package.

Certainly, there had been no "raiding of overseas Filipino workers' funds" and the fund transfer is not, and will never be "aimed at keeping up the glowing figures" on PhilHealth's operations. Contrary to the claim of this militant group, the actual transfer of Owwa-Medicare funds to PhilHealth was made only in March this year, long after the elections were over.

Our president and CEO, Secretary Francisco T. Duque III, has already clarified to media that the P520 million he referred to as PhilHealth's losses to fraudulent claims was "purely speculative" and that it was just an estimate.

—LORNA O. FAJARDO,
chief operating officer,
Philippine Health Insurance Corp.,
Citytate Centre,
709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City

Irresponsible media fan pre-need crisis

I AM writing in connection with Conrado Banal III's column titled "Back to the drawing abroad" (PDI, 5/5/05).

In that article, obvious references were made, without naming names, to myself, my company Philamlife and our parent company American International Group. In particular, Banal charged that I had put down the pre-need industry by proclaiming in the media that my company (Philam Plans) as shielded from trouble, and that I was gloating and boasting about this fact. He further referred to the pending lawsuit filed by some of my relatives against me, a totally unrelated matter. Finally, he alleged that before all this pre-need trouble erupted, I held a meeting with College Assurance Plan officers "wanting to take full control" of that company.

Banal was clearly referring to my recent appearance in a TV talk show ("Dong Puno Live"), wherein the host specifically asked me about the condition of Philam Plans. To this question, I responded by saying that Philam Plans was firmly standing by all its obligations to its planholders and that its situation was different because it never sold open-ended educational plans. This was certainly not gloating or boasting but merely an objective statement in response to a specific question. What I said was a matter of fact which was the only correct thing that I could have said. Given the present situation in the pre-need industry, the public needs all the reassurance it can get.

With regard to my pending lawsuit, I would like to repeat what I have always said in the past: the accusations against me were merely intended to smear my reputation as a result of certain family problems. I would like to let you know that the case has not moved at all since my accusers have not even paid the filing fees for the case. What other proof do I need to present?

Concerning my alleged meeting with CAP officers, please be informed that I was the one who was approached by Robert Sobrepeña, the son of the president of CAP through an intermediary, Jose Bengson III. When I finally agreed to meet with him, Sobrepeña offered us a minority position in CAP. That same afternoon, I conveyed to Bengson that we were not interested in the offer, and as far as I was concerned that was the end of it all.

The pre-need crisis, precipitated by the financial troubles of CAP and Pacific Plans, has already caused considerable consternation among tens of thousands of planholders. I am sure you will agree that irresponsible journalism will only add to the confusion and further fan public ire. The times call for the public and private sectors to band together to try and find a solution to this problem.

—JOSE L. CUISIA JR.,
president and CEO,
Philamlife, Philamlife Building,
U.N. Avenue, Ermita, Manila

Working conditions for public servants

WE OFTEN hear public sector workers making demands—higher wages, respect for trade union rights, better trade union representation in decision-making bodies, etc.—that are just and reasonable. But one very important aspect of public service is the conditions in which civil servants work. It is certainly depressing to see the deplorable and shameful working conditions in almost all government work sites and facilities (e.g., classrooms, construction sites and hospitals). Apparently, the government has paid little attention to this problem, even relegating it to the bottom of its list of priorities.

If it is government priority to provide quality public service, it must provide the facilities and means needed by government workers to serve well.

As the government arm primarily tasked to attend to public sector employment concerns, the Civil Service Commission should come up with standard guidelines and regulations on "Reasonable Working Conditions" (RWCs) or "Occupational Safety and Health"—as the private sector calls them—for all government agencies.

CSC has actually issued two RWC circulars. The first provides the "Checklist of Reasonable Working Conditions" (CRWCs). The circular is quite comprehensive, covering health and sanitation, human resource development, recruitment, promotion, placement, union matters, working hours, and employee-management relations, among others. However, the circular is just a checklist that the management can opt not to follow. As a tool, it cannot produce quantifiable data for determining whether or not a government agency provides it workers with reasonable working conditions. Its best use is as reference material for the union and management in promoting workplace reforms.

The second circular is the "Policy on Working Conditions in the Workplace," which gives much importance to occupational safety and health. This circular requires all government offices, to provide (1) health programs for government employees, (2) adequate office ventilation and lighting in work places, (3) clean and adequate comfort room facilities, (4) potable drinking water, (5) first aid kit/facilities, and (6) hazard insurances.

But the two circulars are insufficient and would not be able to address even half of the RWC problems in government. They are merely suggestive and have no teeth to institutionalize RWC reforms.

For this reason, we need to have legislations to ensure that civil servants are provided with conducive working conditions as a prerequisite for quality government service. But the public sector unions must negotiate for these. With so much politicking and corruption in the government, the public sector is in dire need of legislations to create, implement and monitor RWC standards in government workplaces.

—ANNIE ENRIQUEZ-GERON,
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Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK), 15 Clarion Lily St.,
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Project 6, Quezon City

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SUFFERING TRIBES VAL HANDUMON

Dumagat elder Loida Ocampo, 77, who suffers from tuberculosis is carried by her son as they cross the Macua river at the mountainous area of Doña Remedios Trinidad at the boundary of Umiray town, Quezon and Bulacan. Ricardo San Jose, President of Pinagbuklod na mga Dumagat sa Angat Watershed says most Dumagats suffer from tuberculosis but do not receive any assistance from the government.

Scam seen in ₱903-M Roxas water project

By Felipe V. Celino
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—**A fact-finding body created by Sen. Mar Roxas II has uncovered irregularities in the implementation of the expansion project of the Metro Roxas Water District (MRWD) financed by two loan packages totaling P903 million.**

The investigating team, led by Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) commissioner Nicasio A. Conti, asked the interim MRWD board to immediately submit its findings to the Office of the Ombudsman to determine the administrative, civil and criminal actions against those involved in the scam.

Carmen Andrade, the chair of the MRWD board of directors and sister of incumbent Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario, said they would protest the findings. She maintained there was nothing irregular in the conduct of the water district's expansion project.

Due process

She also decried the absence of due process when the fact-finding committee conducted its investigation, as the members of the board of directors were not given a chance to air their side.

MRWD, which is one of the seven water districts in Capiz, applied for a loan to finance the construction of a treatment plant, additional reservoirs, and rehabilitation of pipelines, both mains and distribution system.

An initial loan of P710 million, provided by the Japan Bank International Cooperation through the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), was approved in April 2000.

The water district applied for an additional loan of P193 million supposedly due to the increase in the total project cost such as price escalation and modification in water treatment plant design from non-automated to a fully automated one.

The additional loan was approved only last January but the contract to build a new water treatment plant was signed as early as December 2003, the report said.

MRWD's board of directors had maintained that it awarded the project's contract under a "design and build" arrangement even before the loan was approved to "fast track" its implementation in view of the closure of the loan package by June 2005.

No consultation

However, the additional loan was never discussed in a public consultation with MRWD consumers. There was also no quantitative basis for the projection done by the consultants that would justify the additional loan, the fact-finding report said.

In its 31-page report dated May 9, the investigating team said that the proposed water treatment plant, which was the purpose of the additional loan, was not beneficial to MRWD in the long run.

The level of water rate utilized in the proposal was not justifiable, and the scheme or sequence of project implementation was very disadvantageous to the water district, it added.

Conti's team report showed that the huge investment in a high capacity automated plant would result in a "debt trap" as the water district could not absorb the high cost of producing water under a highly mechanized system.

Also, the report said, implementing the project would mean that MRWD would no longer be able to use several assets that are still in good condition.

Financial relief

It also strongly recommended that LWUA, which disbursed the loan obtained from the Japanese funding agency, should consider giving MRWD a financial relief package by reducing the loan's interest rates, temporarily stop or spread out the period of payments or even consider converting part of its loan to the water district equity.

The fact-finding committee was created by Roxas in February after communities of Roxas City and the nearby towns of Ivisan, Panitan and Panay questioned the project's viability, particularly its impact on water prices and its subsequent increases.

It's main task was to determine the viability of the proposed treatment plant to be put up at Paslang, Panitan.

The fact-finding body recommended that MRWD does not decommission the Lawaan Treatment Plant and instead upgrade the water intake structure in Paslang and construct an incremental 10,000 to 20,000 cubic meter water treatment plant at the abandoned Arakabalo pumping station.

John Hay developers preparing for gov't takeover of property

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan has introduced a provision in the new investment code that would grant tax benefits to economic zones managed by the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), including Camp John Hay here, Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga, and Poro Point in La Union.

Domogan told the INQUIRER on Wednesday that the code absorbed his proposed measure correcting the flaws of Presidential Proclamation 420, which former President Fidel Ramos issued in 1994 to create the Camp John Hay special economic zone.

The Supreme Court nullified with finality the tax provisions of Proclamation 420 in a March decision. The court said only Congress had the power to grant tax incentives.

But despite developments in Congress, the Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) has alerted its security teams against an illegal takeover by the government. CJHDevco is the firm undertaking John Hay's conversion into a P4-billion tourism estate for a consortium run by Fil Estate and Penta Capital.

Lawyer Georgina Alvarez, CJHDevco senior vice president for legal and corporate affairs, said they were warned about a takeover after they sued BCDA before the Philippine Dispute Resolution Center (PDRC), a corporate arbitration agency, for P10.9 billion in damages.

Projected income

The amount represented prospective revenues CJHDevco lost as a result of the nullification of its tax benefits.

Lawyer Lyssa Pagano-Calde, BCDA spokesperson, said the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel has filed a motion for reconsideration at the Supreme Court, but she said only legislation could resolve the tax mess confronting the economic zones at John Hay, Poro Point and Clark.

She said BCDA is also suing CJHDevco to collect P1.2 billion in back rentals.

Calde said BCDA had already cancelled the John Hay lease contract because of this debt. But she said the BCDA document was withdrawn when the government signed a July 18, 2003, memorandum of agreement with CJHDevco, allowing the developer to pay the government cash and assets to fulfill its rent obligations.

Among the assets it promised the government are cottages and log cabins that have yet to be built, as well as revenues that would be generated from their sale.

No turnover

Calde, however, said the developer never signed over these assets to the government despite the agreement.

Fil Estate chair Robert John Sobrepeña, CJHDevco president, also decided to default on these payments last year.

In a letter to BCDA, Sobrepeña cited the court's first ruling in 2004 that the tax perks of economic zones did not apply to Camp John Hay.

Calde said the government believes Sobrepeña has used the court ruling as a smokescreen to hide his firm's inability to pay its debts.

Domogan said the investment code is being discussed in plenary sessions, and may soon be submitted to the Senate. Congress expects a legislative resolution to the BCDA economic zone tax problem by the end of the year, he said.

But BCDA itself may still not benefit from legislation that corrects the John Hay tax mess, Domogan said.

A new investment law will not retroactively correct the errors of the proclamation, he said.

"BCDA is still liable to all [BCDA-administered economic zones, except the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority] for including the tax benefits in their terms of reference when they bid out John Hay, Clark and Poro Point to investors. Suddenly, in the middle of the game, the BCDA [reneges by withdrawing the tax benefits]," Domogan said.

Vets say struggle going on to keep RP free from FMD

BAGUIO CITY—Animal experts here said they are fighting to eliminate the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in the country so they can export meat.

Dr. Anthony Bucad, field veterinarian of the National Foot and Mouth Disease in the Cordillera, said FMD was one reason the country could not compete with other countries.

Among the top meat exporters are United States and Australia.

Citing the FMD Monitor Special Research Edition 2002, Bucad said at the height of the FMD epidemic in 1995, the livestock sector group lost P2 billion in revenues because consumers feared eating infected pork.

The research said 22 provinces in Luzon were hit with the FMD virus where 98,604 animals were affected.

Bucad said hog raisers in Luzon have been exerting efforts to eradicate the disease since the early 1990s.

Historically, the FMD phenomenon was not experienced in the country until China introduced pigs in the Philippines in 1902, Bucad said.

He said some of the pigs that were brought from China were infected and had proliferated until this time.

The National FMD Task Force reported that the infection is extremely contagious and there is a threat that it could be introduced to clean areas by illegal trade of pigs or pig meat.

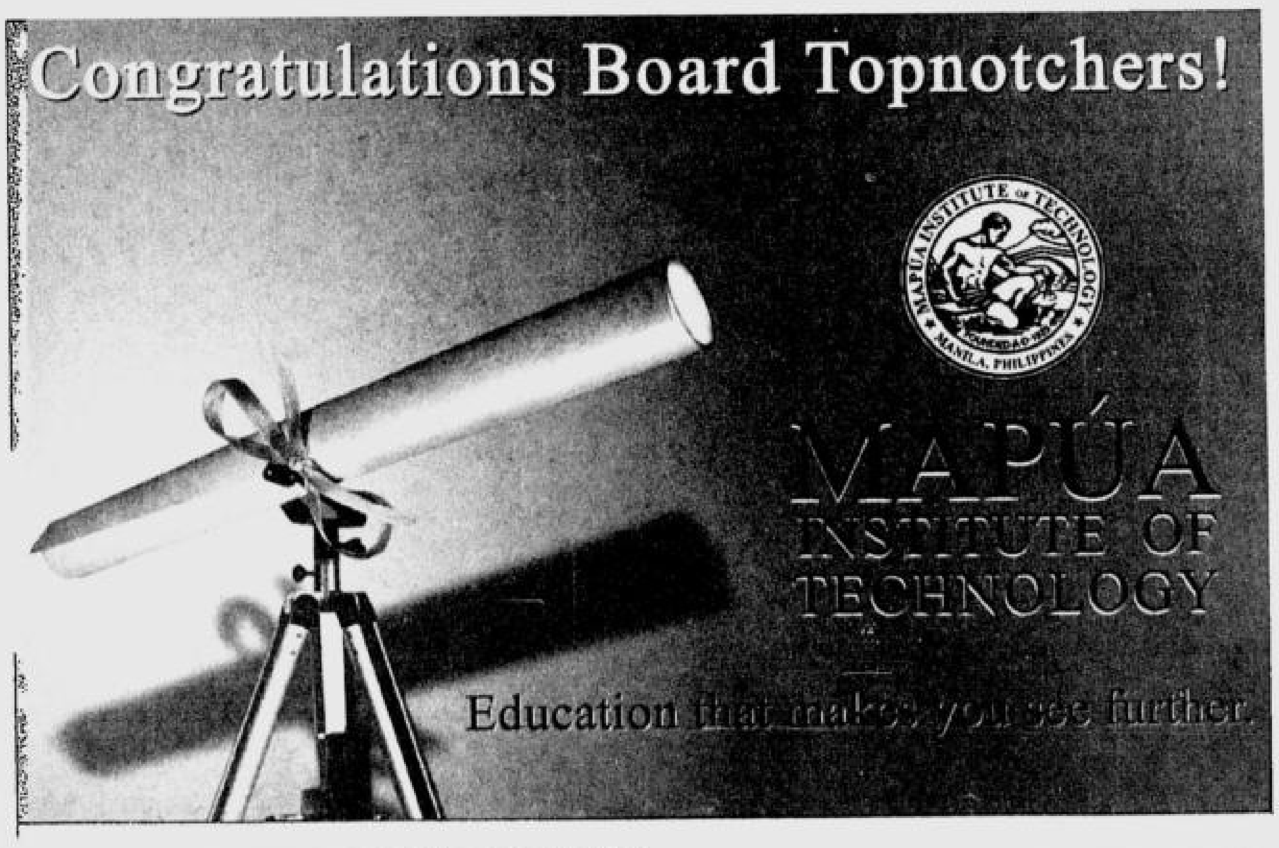
Bucad said geography is one reason why Luzon has been the most affected.

"We have water as a natural barrier that would separate Luzon from other islands such as the Visayas and Mindanao. Because of this barrier, it is easier to control the disease unlike in Luzon ... which is so big and the pigs are transported by land," he said.

But because of the outbreak in 1995, former President Fidel Ramos declared Luzon as a calamity area.

FMD corners are located in seaports and airports to monitor the meat.

Bucad said even processed meats are being monitored because they can be carriers of the disease. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*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Misamis execs ban airing of 'masiao' results

OROQUIETA CITY—The provincial government of Misamis Occidental has imposed additional penalties on broadcast outfits that air "masiao"-related materials.

In a recently approved measure, dubbed as the "anti-masiao" ordinance, a penalty of six months to one year plus a fine of P5,000 is imposed on "announcers, broadcasters and commentators of radio, local and cable television stations who announce or broadcast jai-alai games."

Whether these jai-alai games are really played or not, their final results, usually a three-number combination from 1 to 10, is used as basis for masiao betting.

Prior to the ordinance's enactment, the Philippine National Police reported that many of the broadcast stations in the province are engaged in airing masiao-related materials, especially the final results during early morning broadcasts.

There are also broadcast blocktimers who air betting "tips."

The police report noted that in Ozamis City alone, four of the six radio stations air masiao-related materials.

This practice by the broadcast outfits was seen as "lending credence" to masiao and is blamed for the rapid expansion of betting operations.

The ordinance also imposes similar penalties on broadcast station "owners and managers who knowingly allow the broadcasting" of the jai-alai game "whether real or not."

In addition, the ordinance also penalizes owners and managers of printing shops who print jai-alai programs, tips, tally sheets and other masiao paraphernalia.

The measure also decreed the revocation of business permits for the said establishments if these were found perpetrating the violation.

Masiao, which is declared an illegal numbers game by Republic Act No. 9287, is widespread throughout the Zamboanga Peninsula.

A P1 bet wins P400 if one correctly guesses the exact order of the three-number combination.

Women's rights advocates have blamed the masiao vice for creating domestic tension between husbands and wives of mostly low-income families that led to the increase in cases of domestic violence being reported to social welfare agencies and organizations in Misamis Occidental.

Under existing laws, penalties are already imposed on individuals and establishments involved in masiao.

But according to Gov. Loreto Leo Ocampos, the additional penalties are imposed in order to make it more prohibitive.

For a very long time, the practice of airing masiao results had become "common fare" for radio stations. Sources said this is netting huge sums for broadcast outfits. *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

SURFING SORSOGON BULLIT MARQUEZ/AP

Jorgene Duana is airborne as he surfs on a thin layer of water on the shores of Bacon, Sorsogon in a latest surfing sport known as "skimming." The sport is played by throwing the "skim board" on a thin layer of water and riding on it while performing tricks just like on a skateboard.

Camarines unfinished bridge rusting away

NAGA CITY—Concerned residents here and in two towns in Camarines Sur have expressed fear that the metal components of a P100-million alternate bridge here may succumb to obsolescence due to rusting or they may fall into the hands of thieves if the project remains unfinished despite the availability of funds.

The bridge, called the Mabolo-Sabang bridge, was aimed at linking Naga City and the towns of Sabang and Gainza in Camarines Sur, according to Department of Public Works and Highways Bicol regional director Orlando Roces.

Roces added that it is an alternate bridge to the Mabolo Bridge along the Maharlika Highway, which was destroyed sometime in late 1990s.

The project was started in 2002 by the DPWH Bureau of Construction and had an original cost of P100 million.

Of this amount, P6 million was for the right-of-way payments; P5 million for supervision and other administrative expenses, and P89 million for the construction of the bridge.

Maritime authorities, however, stepped in and recommended a higher clearance to allow bigger vessels entering the Bicol River to pass underneath, requiring a higher pier and approaches to the bridge.

Additional funds were released—P7 million in 2003 and P30 million in 2004.

Despite these additional amounts, however, the project contractor could not proceed with the project further—arguing that with the delay in the construction timetable due to changes made, 2005 current prices of construction materials had shot up while the original project cost was based on 2001 prices. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Kin of suspects in traders' kidnap cry torture

COTABATO CITY—Relatives of three men suspected of involvement in the kidnapping of a Filipino-Chinese trader here on April 8 have accused the police of torturing the suspects to extract confession.

"They were being tortured but the police could not get anything because they are not kidnappers," Rabia Abas, a relative of the suspects said.

The suspected kidnappers, Omar Datukon Abas, 32; Abdulwahab Abdulhamid, 26; and Guiapar Abdulkarim, 29, were arrested on April 29 after police said that witnesses have identified them in the disappearance of businessman Benny Kotah.

Kotah, 45, was abducted near his home.

Abas said her nephews have told policemen that they have nothing to admit.

Supt. Lumala Gunting, spokesperson of the police in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), said the suspects were identified by witnesses as among the group of men that abducted Kotah.

"A robber would not admit in public that he robbed someone," Gunting said on charges the police failed to extract any information from the suspects.

He also denied that they were being tortured into confessing.

"That is a violation of their human rights. They are human too and the police know that. They were not harmed," he said.

Gunting said that when the suspects were arrested in Matanóg, policemen seized three handguns from the suspects. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Lightning kills 1, injures 2 in Negros

BACOLOD CITY—An 18-year-old farm worker was killed while her aunt and younger sister were hospitalized after they were struck by lightning on Wednesday afternoon in La Castellana town in Negros Occidental.

Killed was Rose Sumugat, a resident of Barangay Manghanoy, La Castellana, about 67.3 km south of this city.

Her sister, Daylen Sumugat, 9, and aunt Dyna Taypo, 38, were rushed to the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital in Bacolod.

A report from radio station dyEZ Aksyon Radyo said Rose was cutting the sugarcane in the rain when the lightning struck, hitting her in the back.

Paquito Tayco, husband of Dyna, said in the radio interview that he was several meters from the three victims when the lightning struck.

After hearing a loud crackle, Paquito said he saw smoke coming out of the back of Rose.

"*Wasak guid iya likod kag sunog pati iya buli kag paa* (Her back was shattered and her buttocks and legs were burned)," he told radio station dyEZ.

He said his wife suffered burns in the buttocks and back. It was not immediately known what the extent of the injuries of Daylen is. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

₱2.2M in illegal lumber seized in Tacloban port

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The government scored anew in its campaign against illegal logging as members of the Task Force Sagip Kalikasan confiscated lumber estimated to be worth P2.2 million at the public port of this city.

Alfonso Dagudag, chief of the task force under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the seized lumber have a total volume of 75,847.16 board feet and were loaded in M/L Robin I, which originated from Tagdubas, Tawi-Tawi.

The vessel, which is owned by a certain Robin and registered in Zamboanga City, arrived in the city's port on Sunday night, Dagudag said.

He said they seized the lumber following an inspection by the task force on Monday afternoon because the ship's captain, Estacio Pateño, failed to show any document that would prove the legality of the shipment.

Based on their interrogation of Pateño, the pieces of lumber that included red lawa-an, apitong and other tree species were to be delivered to Nelson Padua, owner of the Niel Lumberyard located in San Jose district, this city.

Dagudag said Pateño, skipper Mario Zaragoza and 13 other crew members of M/L Robin were detained inside the vessel docked at the city port, located along Quezon Avenue, pending the filing of appropriate charges against them.

He said they would charge the arrested persons with violating Presidential Decree 7052 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

"We're able to learn about this vessel loaded with the illegal logs through an information that we received from our sources. Immediately after, we alerted our team here in the region to monitor the vessel," Dagudag said.

He also said he already asked Leonardo Sibbaluca, regional executive director of the DENR-Eastern Visayas, to issue a hold order against the vessel and its 15 crew members.

Dagudag added that the seized items were now deposited at the regional headquarters of the Philippine National Police based in Camp Ruperto Kangleon, Palo, Leyte.

MAYORS' CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn, chair of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP), presides over a meeting in the city of the LCP composed of mayors of different cities in the country. Among those who attended were (from left) Antipolo Mayor Angelito Gatlabayan, Mayor Jane Ortega of San Fernando, La Union, and Mayor Senen Sarmiento of Calbayog City.

Cagayan town beats Vizcaya over 'tupig'

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A town in Cagayan beat Nueva Vizcaya's 1.8-kilometer long *tupig* (a grilled rice cake wrapped in banana leaves) after five days.

More than 5,000 residents in Lasam town (pop: 34,082) ate the 2.82-km long *tupig* displayed at the town's center on May 19, five days after Solano town in Nueva Vizcaya grilled their version of the longest *tupig* in its bid to beat the 1.5-km record set by Laoag City in 2002.

"We highly intend to register it to the Guinness Book of World Records, if warranted, and if it deserves the record, then we will request for its inclusion," Lasam Mayor Eulogio Agatep Jr. told the INQUIRER.

He said the event, which was attended by government and nongovernment officials, fortified the unity of Lasam residents as about 100 residents helped each other in grilling their tupig. The *tupig* was displayed from Centro Uno to Alannay villages. *Tupig* is made of glutinous rice, known in Iloco dialect as *diket*. The milled *diket* is mixed with sugar, pulverized peanuts, and corn. Then it is wrapped in banana or coconut leaves for grilling for at least five minutes. A kilo of flavor-mixed *diket* can produce at least 100 pieces of Iloco sweets. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Explosives found under bridge

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police said they thwarted a sinister plan of suspected communist rebels to sow terror in Calabarzon after they discovered a cache of explosive materials under a concrete bridge in a far-flung village in Silang, Cavite on Thursday afternoon.

Senior Supt. Abner Cabalquinto, Calabarzon police chief for operations, said residents of Barangay Kaong sought the assistance of the Silang municipal police station after they found bomb materials and live ammunition below the Kaong-Sabutan Bridge.

Response

He said members of the local police immediately went to the area together with a unit of the Explosives and Ordinance Division of the SWAT-Cavite to check the report.

Cabalquinto said responding policemen were surprised to find several explosives, bullets and detonating devices concealed under a mound of garbage.

Recovered from the area were two plastic bars of C4 bombs weighing 2 lbs. each, a six-kilo improvised TNT bomb, two rifle grenades, 700 pieces of blasting caps and five pieces of all-weather igniter time fuse.

Also found from the area were 45 pieces live ammunition for cal. 45 pistol, three boxes of live ammunition for cal. 38 pistol and 64 feet of detonating cord.

"If the (New People's Army) were able to utilize this for their operations, this could have resulted to a great damage," Cabalquinto said in a press briefing.

Supt. Rustico Bascugin, Calabarzon police public information office chief, said the bombs were all registered under the Armed Forces of the Philippines. "Except for the improvised bombs, only the military are allowed to use and procure these type of bombs and bomb devices. We don't know yet how the NPAs were able to get hold of these," Bascugin said.

Asked if unscrupulous soldiers could have sold the explosives to the rebels, Cabalquinto replied: "We're looking into that."

He added that it was likewise possible that the NPAs obtained the bombs in one of their raids on military camps.

Power

SPO3 Jose Villanueva, chief of the SWAT-Cavite, said the discovered explosives were enough to destroy a two-story building if placed properly.

Villanueva said the bombs are also enough to ruin the entire bridge where it was found.

He, however, said there were no indications that the bombs were intentionally placed under the bridge as the materials were not set appropriately.

Asked how they were able to tell that the explosives belonged to the NPA, Bascugin said there were regular sightings of the communist group in the area. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Rebs kill village chief

PURA, Tarlac—Suspected New People's Army rebels gunned down the barangay chair of Balete here on Tuesday night. Police said Jesus Bueno, 62, was attacked by at least three men in front of his wife, Conchita, and his neighbors. Bueno died while being taken to the Rayos Hospital in Paniqui town. Reports said the suspects fled toward a sugarcane field. Bueno, police said, was killed after he reportedly fed government soldiers information on the activities of NPA rebels here. But Conchita, 62, said her husband was not an informer of the military. ***Ronaldo Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

2 brothers held for slay

TUMAUINI, Isabela—Police arrested two brothers here after they allegedly shot and killed their grandparents and a cousin over a land dispute on May 17. Police said Flora and Candido Gambol, both 61, and Hipolito Cay-an, 38, were attacked by brothers Mario and Alfredo Gambol in Barangay Antagan 2nd here. Reports said the suspects, both farmers, went to the house of their grandparents at past 12 a.m. on May 17 to confront them about a parcel of land that they inherited from their parents and which the couple supposedly took from them. The brothers, who were armed with an Armalite rifle and a shotgun, first shot Flora Gambol. Candido Gambol and Cay-an tried to help the woman but the suspects also shot them. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

P10M in marijuana seized

CAMP DANGWA, Benguet—Police uprooted and seized more than P10.7 million worth of marijuana plants, leaves and seeds in a plantation in Kibungan, Benguet on Sunday. A report reaching this camp on Tuesday, said police teams from Kapangan and Kibungan towns and the provincial police office discovered the plantation in Sitio Baukok in Barangay Badeo, Kibungan on Sunday morning. At least 16,000 marijuana plants, worth P3.2 million, were uprooted by policemen. The troops also recovered 300 kg of dried marijuana leaves, worth P7.5 million, and 500 grams of dried marijuana seeds, worth P12,500, in the site. Police, however, failed to arrest any suspect at the plantation. ***PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Man nabbed for rape

CAMP DANGWA, Benguet—Police on Sunday arrested a man wanted for raping a woman in Baguio City in September last year. The suspect, Rodolfo Balutoc, 45, a resident of Balbalan, Kalinga, was arrested in his hometown in Kalinga on May 15, police said. Balutoc was included in the Department of Interior and Local Government's list of most wanted suspects, with a P300,000-reward for his arrest. ***PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Forester held

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Police on Monday arrested a forester of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources who has reportedly been extorting money from wood traders in Tarlac for several years. Mariano Simangan, 42, a DENR employee assigned in the City of San Fernando, was arrested in an entrapment operation in Barangay Dau in Mabalacat, Pampanga. Recovered from Simangan was P5,000 in marked money, said Supt. Andrei Felix, chief of the police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Tarlac. Felix said they arrested Simangan on the complaint of wood trader Eliza Milla. Milla, according to him, was "fed up" by Simangan's constant demand for money. Milla said Simangan took a total of P150,000 from her last year. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

2 die, 21 hurt in bus crash

BACOLOD CITY—A bus driver and a 47-year-old woman were killed while 21 passengers were injured when a Ceres Liner bus swerved off the road and rammed into trees in Barangay Calumangan, Bago City, 21.5 km south of here, at about 4:45 p.m. Thursday. Driver Melvin Traver Aldon, of San Enrique, Negros Occidental, died while undergoing treatment at the Riverside Medical Center here. The other victim, Ligaya Baloyo Colango, of Gardenville Subdivision, Barangay Tangub here, was dead on arrival at the Bago City Hospital. Police said the accident happened when Aldon, who was driving very fast, tried to avoid a motorcycle that suddenly crossed the highway. The bus, which came from Hinoba-an town, was on its way to Bacolod. Police said all the wounded had been identified except for a young woman wearing black and white striped T-shirt. ***Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

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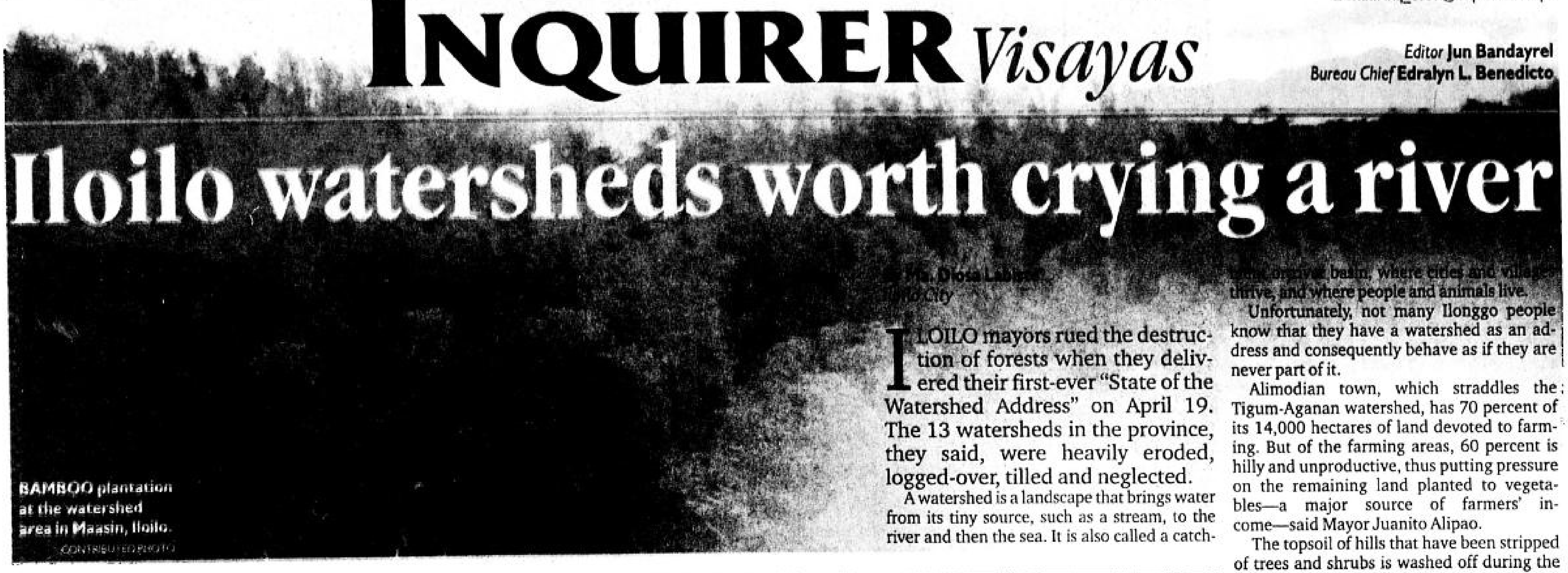
INQUIRER Visayas

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Edralyn L. Benedicto**

Iloilo watersheds worth crying a river



BAMBOO plantation at the watershed area in Maasin, Iloilo.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

ILOILO mayors rued the destruction of forests when they delivered their first-ever "State of the Watershed Address" on April 19. The 13 watersheds in the province, they said, were heavily eroded, logged-over, tilled and neglected.

A watershed is a landscape that brings water from its tiny source, such as a stream, to the river and then the sea. It is also called a catchment or river basin, where cities and villages thrive, and where people and animals live.

Unfortunately, not many Ilonggo people know that they have a watershed as an address and consequently behave as if they are never part of it.

Alimodian town, which straddles the Tigum-Aganan watershed, has 70 percent of its 14,000 hectares of land devoted to farming. But of the farming areas, 60 percent is hilly and unproductive, thus putting pressure on the remaining land planted to vegetables—a major source of farmers' income—said Mayor Juanito Alipao.

The topsoil of hills that have been stripped of trees and shrubs is washed off during the rainy season.

Rivers traversing Alimodian are no longer healthy. Their banks overflow when it rains heavily and dry up during summer.

Farms and people are not the only ones affected. Up in the mountains, where trees are being felled, several endangered species of endemic animals are found. They are commonly named the writhed hornbill, Visayan spotted deer, cloud rat and warty pig.

Rafflesia, one of the largest flowers in the world, is found in Alimodian's mountains that are linked to the central Panay mountain range.

Flooding history

Downstream and 24 km from Alimodian is Iloilo City, which enjoys piped water coming from the watershed of the Tigum-Aganan. The city has kept a "flooding history" in recent decades, especially in the 1990s.

The flooding has been blamed on the soil erosion and sand quarrying upstream, which bears down on city residents, especially those living in squatter communities along rivers, creeks and low-lying areas.

City environment officer Noel Hechanova, who represented Mayor Jerry Treñas, reported that at least 60 percent of the city's land area was flood-prone, and that floods could easily affect 126,000 residents, or one third of the city population, and 1,200 business establishments.

The city is also beset with limited supply of potable water, garbage that find its way into waterways and the sea, saltwater intrusion in wells, and contaminated ground water.

Dumangas town, 43 km from the city, belongs to the Lower Jalaur Watershed. Along with other rice-growing towns in central Iloilo, the watershed is nourished by the Jalaur River.

Mayor Rolando Distura said tons of topsoil passed through his town before settling on the fishponds. Dredging has been a regular, costly task.

Shared solutions

While the conditions of watersheds in Iloilo are worth crying a river, the mayors shared ways of rehabilitating them with the help of communities.

In Alimodian, young people celebrated Valentine's Day by staging a disco, in which tickets were bought with seeds of fruit or forest trees. The event, named "Sirinugot" (meaning consensus), requires young people to bring seeds of avocado, jackfruit, mango, mahogany, narra and coconut for the local seed bank and nursery.

The town has also turned to organic farming. It conducts field classes for farmers, holds tree planting activities, and encourages villages to adopt a mountain for re-greening.

In Dumangas, Distura officiates at a mass wedding every year, but couples are required to plant trees. The town has a number of ordinances on coastal marine conservation, including one on planting mangroves.

Iloilo City tries to improve its garbage collection and explores ways of dealing with silt and trash that choke its rivers and waterways.

'Food tables'

The efforts, however, have not been enough to rehabilitate the watersheds of San Joaquin, Miagao, Guimbal, Tigum Aganan, Sibalom-Baguingin, Magapa-Suage, Upper Jalaur, Lower Jalaur, Sara-San Dionisio-Ajuy, Serruco-Lanjagan, Almitana-Marapal, Alacaygan-Anilao and Sibajo.

Iloilo has only less than 10 percent of forest cover, of which 40 percent is needed to support agriculture.

Jessica Salas, co-chair of the Iloilo Watershed Management Council, said towns and communities must work together to protect the land, flora, fauna and water in the watersheds.

The watersheds are "our food tables," she said, "where everyone sit around and partake of meal for human, social and economic development."

DAM IN Barangay Daha, Maasin, Iloilo.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HALAGA NG IMPORTED DIESEL PER BARREL

$32 2003

$47 2004

$73 2005

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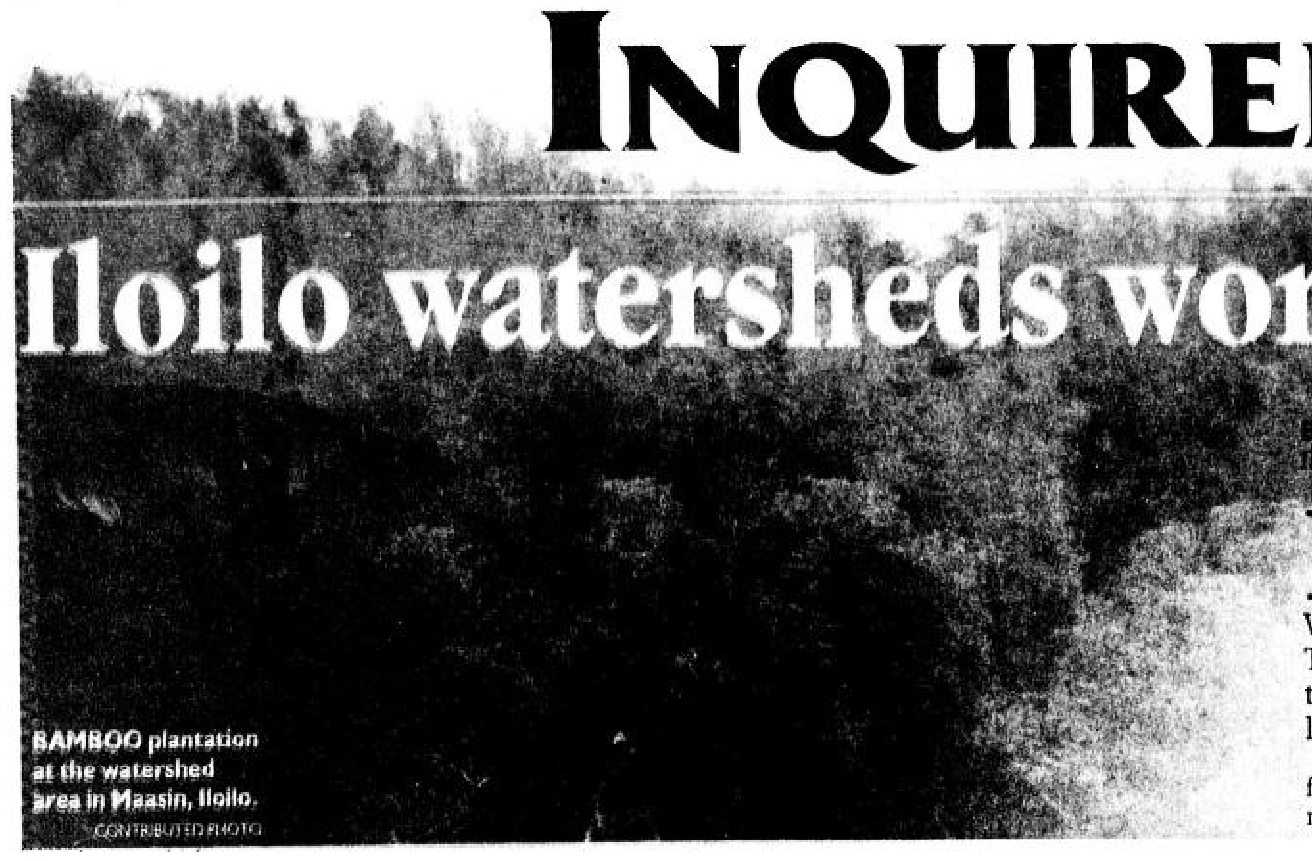

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Tonton speaks up, denies jueteng link

By Philip C. Tubeza

A GRANDSON of the late Bataan Rep. Pablo Roman yesterday strongly denied reports that he acted as a jueteng bagman for Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo.

Pablo "Tonton" Roman III said in a statement faxed to the House of Representatives media center that he was a legitimate businessman and that his family never engaged in jueteng.

"I vehemently deny that Mikey Arroyo asked for P500,000 through me from alleged jueteng operators as erroneously published in the news. The truth of the matter is that I am not involved in jueteng. I am a legitimate businessman and will not taint my family name," he said.

One of Sen. Panfilo Lacson's witnesses, identified by the INQUIRER as B2, claimed that Arroyo asked for P500,000 from Central Luzon jueteng operators in 2002 through "a certain Tonton, allegedly a son of Bataan Gov. Pablo Roman."

Erroneous

"Clearly, I am the Tonton being alluded to in the erroneous news reports. However, I want to make it clear that I am not the son of the late Pablo Roman but (is) actually his grandson. My father is Victor Roman," he said.

He added that his grandfather never became a Bataan governor and that it was his uncle Leonardo "Ding" Roman, who served as governor. Ding Roman ran for congressman in the last election but lost in a contested result. His protest is pending.

Tonton, currently the vice president and board member of the R and B Insurance Company Inc., said he was willing to cooperate in "any investigation on jueteng."

He lamented that media did "not even bother to get his side, or even check its elementary facts, before running the false and malicious news item."

"I am asking that they publish my statement with the equal prominence that they afforded these so-called unnamed persons involved in jueteng who maliciously implicated me," Tonton said.

A spokesperson for the Roman family also denied that former Gov. Leonardo Roman or his father had anything to do with jueteng.

"Such irresponsible, malicious, and fabricated reporting has no room in our society. It was never the intention of those who concocted the idea of press freedom, nor it is the desire of those who believed in it," said Robert Tuason.

He noted that the late Pablo Roman, who died in 1976, never became Bataan governor and served as congressman from 1965 until former President Ferdinand Marcos abolished Congress in 1972.

Iconic

"Best known as the father of the Free Trade Zone, forerunner of the now Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza), Don Pablo has become an icon here as he is believed (to be) among (the) the respected statesmen the country has produced over the past 60 years," Tuason said.

He added that Leonardo Roman also does not have a son named Tonton. His eldest son, Chris, is an incoming sophomore student at the University of the Philippines and his other sons are just elementary students who "could not have meddled in local government affairs," much less in jueteng activities.

Stop trial by publicity, solons tell Lacson

By Philip C. Tubeza

IT'S JUST another media witch-hunt.

Administration lawmakers yesterday came to the defense of beleaguered father and son, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, who were being linked to "jueteng" scandals.

Reps. Exequiel Javier (Antique) and Antonio Cuenco (Cebu) said opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson should stop conducting trial by publicity against the Arroyos after he admitted that he had no direct evidence to implicate the two to the illegal numbers game.

"Yesterday, he was interviewed on DZMM in the morning and said there was no evidence to link the Arroyos to jueteng. Yet in the afternoon, he issued a useless challenge to them to open their bank accounts. We are getting confused," they said in a joint statement.

Cheap shots

Javier urged Lacson to stop "resorting to cheap shots," adding that he should let the Ombudsman and Department of Justice pursue their own investigations.

"Ping himself admitted there was no evidence to directly implicate them. Clearly, he is into witch-hunting. This is unfair to the First Gentleman and Rep. Arroyo who should be given the chance to clear their names in the forthcoming probe by the justice department and Ombudsman," he said.

"So what's the fuss all about that he has so-called witnesses who will come up with explosive revelations? He should spare The First Family and the entire country from these intrigues," Cuenco said.

They also dismissed as "sheer grandstanding" Lacson's challenge to members of the First Family to divulge their bank accounts, saying such disclosure was unnecessary since the bank account details were already provided in the statement of assets and liabilities and net worth of the Arroyos.

"He should stop mangling the truth just to discredit other people," he added.

Whitewash?

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano expressed fears of a possible whitewash in the jueteng investigation by the Ombudsman and the DOJ, saying the two were not credible agencies.

"Political credibility is the first problem facing the DOJ or the Ombudsman's jueteng probe. The President's orders to probe her family could be taken as a desperate move to whitewash the case," he said.

Nene: GMA benefited from jueteng, but . . .

From page A1

were paid for by [him), where did Bong Pineda get so much money that he can afford to have those posters printed for Gloria's campaign?"

At the start of the forum, the senator-lawyer said he had no proof to back allegations by a supposed jueteng operator and two bagmen that the President's husband Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo and their elder son Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, had received protection money.

24 witnesses

"I don't have the evidence to link the President directly to jueteng money, so as I said, you people in media can say that, but I cannot. I will stick to my stand that when I say something, I can back it up," he said.

Pimentel said that apart from the 24 witnesses to be presented at the Senate inquiry, five more were willing to talk about the people on the jueteng take.

"The best that I can tell you is this: Even my witnesses, who are now hiding, can only [say] up to a point [the names of] jueteng lords and [government] officials receiving money," he said, adding:

"We can never tell if [directly linking the Arroyos is] going to happen in the investigation. The question will be answered when the witnesses appear."

Not pawns

Pimentel said the "luxurious" campaign posters that portrayed Ms Arroyo as "another Nora Aunor in politics" showed they were "paid for by Bong Pineda."

However, he stressed that he and Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, who is leading anti-jueteng crusade, were "not pawns in any political game, especially as regards the desire to topple Gloria."

"I know that Gloria does not deserve to be there—she was elected fraudulently. But it does not mean that I will use extra-constitutional means to kick her out of office," he said.

Vital ingredient lacking

But Pimentel, who was Senate President during the aborted impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada, said the present confluence of events still lacked a vital ingredient that would bring down the Arroyo administration.

"The difference is there was a [Ilocos Sur Gov.] Chavit Singson who linked Estrada directly [to jueteng]," he said.

Pimentel also said that even before Ms Arroyo became president, he had been advocating a shift to a federal system from the present presidential form of government.

"There's a sharing of power [in a federal form], triggering the fastest economic development in the country, and there would be less coup [attempts] by military adventurists," he said.

Under threat

The supposed jueteng operator and two bagmen for influential people are seeking protection from the Senate, where they intend to spill the beans on people on the take from jueteng lords.

Even before they could come out in the open to testify, the jueteng men said they were "under threat" from people they were likely to implicate in the illegal numbers game.

A jueteng lord, whom the INQUIRER report dubbed as O1, reported unwanted visits by unknown men to his house somewhere in Luzon since he and two bagmen spoke with the INQUIRER and GMA 7 last Wednesday.

While he said nothing would stop him from testifying at the Senate, O1, who described himself as "very well known in the jueteng industry," said he was worried for his and his family's safety because he knew he was up against powerful persons.

P9.2M monthly

O1 has said he had been giving as much as P9.2 million a month in jueteng protection money for officials of the Philippine National Police, provincial police directors and other PNP officials, governors, mayors, and even members of the media through two conduits in Camp Crame in Quezon City.

On the other hand, the bagmen, dubbed B1 and B2, said they collected payola supposedly given to the Arroyo father and son—a charge vehemently denied by Malacañang.

B1, B2 and O1 wanted to testify at the jueteng investigation to be conducted by the Senate. But they have yet to contact Senate officials or to make their appeal formally to the committees on games and on public order, which are to conduct the inquiry.

The committees, chaired by Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid and Sen. Manuel Villar respectively, have not even come up with a list of guests or individuals to invite.

Protection

B1 expressed hope that they would be given protection for their testimony.

"If possible, they should protect us because we are still working for our families," he told the INQUIRER. "People whom we are implicating have the capacity to harm us."

O1 agreed: "I hope the Senate or Congress can provide protection for people like us who are exposing anomalies in the government."

Aside from possible physical harm, O1 said they were also certain of being discredited by their foes.

"What happens is, if somebody comes out to talk about illegal activities, his entire life will be scrutinized. What the defense does is destroy your credibility. Our appeal is for [authorities] to verify what we are saying, and if they can prove that we lied, then they can jail us," O1 said.

He added: "But we should not be treated or asked questions like we are criminals, or asked everything about our families. Who would want to expose irregularities if they will be treated this way? They will go against rich people who can have them killed."

O1 recalled the case of the Land Bank of the Philippines employee, Acsa Ramirez, who exposed a tax scam but was herself charged.

Silencing them

"It's so sad, isn't it? Now, if there is protection, many people will come out to talk about not just jueteng but [also] corruption and thieves in government," he said.

An official who declined to be named said government agents were after the jueteng witnesses to keep them silent or force them to retract their planned testimony.

This was the official's take on Ms Arroyo's order for the investigation of the jueteng exposé against her husband and son, and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's order to identify the witnesses.

"The purpose of the order is to identify the witnesses to control them. They are being tracked down ostensibly to be offered protection. but the intention is to make them retract," the official said.

Pimentel said at least five of his own witnesses were also fearing for their lives.

"*Takot na takot* (So afraid)" was how he described them.

"Some of them have been moving to different houses," he said in a phone interview.

But according to Pimentel, the Senate does not have its own protection program for the potential witnesses. He said they could be admitted to the government's Witness Protection Program administered by the Department of Justice.

Caveat

In another phone interview, Pimentel said jueteng whistle-blowers should not detail their first-hand knowledge about the illegal numbers game in the media to avoid being discounted outright.

Any disclosure by the potential witnesses before the start of the official Senate inquiry would run the risk of being dismissed by gambling operators and protectors, he said.

"I'm a little worried about this development. Obviously, there might be an attempt to explore the extent of their knowledge about jueteng and to limit it. It can be a ploy either way," he said.

He stressed that any testimony would be best aired during official inquiries. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

Exposé part of destabilization plot, say Gloria's men

From page A1

that there was no known government official accusing the Arroyos of receiving jueteng money, the way Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson did in President Joseph Estrada's case.

This time, he said, the First Gentleman's accuser was not even sure if the money actually reached the targeted pocket. He also noted that Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz had also admitted that what he had was secondary evidence at best.

"These are things that should be taken in the context of the overall situation," said Gonzalez, who yesterday formed a task force to investigate the latest allegations against the Arroyos.

Media members also

"We will file charges, if necessary, against those involved, including Mike Arroyo and Rep. Mikey Arroyo," he told justice reporters in a separate phone interview.

In the interview with the INQUIRER, Gonzalez said the task force would also investigate members of the media who were allegedly receiving money from jueteng lords and could be part of the supposed destabilization plot.

Asked if he was suggesting that the INQUIRER, which first broke the story on jueteng payoffs, had taken money from supposed coup plotters, Gonzalez said he was basing his statements on news reports run by the newspaper.

"According to the same story in the INQUIRER, there are people in the media who are linked to jueteng lords," he said.

"We will also ask priests to explain where they got the money to build their churches," he also said, adding that the task force needed everybody's cooperation.

Asked how he had arrived at the destabilization scenario, Gonzalez said he received the information from intelligence sources.

But the purported plot does not have the backing of the military, he said.

"So we cannot disregard this as a mere jueteng issue because it involves national security," he said.

Gonzalez said the task force would also tackle the "criminal aspect" of the non-government officials involved in the jueteng issue, including members of the First Family.

He said it would likewise look into reports that overseas Filipino workers were being used by jueteng lords for money laundering.

In-depth probe

Ermita expressed hope that the supposed destabilization plot would not prosper given the many challenges facing the government, including the need to turn the economy around,

He said this was why an in-depth investigation was required.

"For me, what's important is we get to the bottom of the whole thing so that the truth would come out," he said.

Asked to comment on the call of Archbishop Cruz for the President to crack down on illegal gambling lest she end up like her deposed predecessor, Ermita said he knew that Ms Arroyo had ordered local government units and the Philippine National Police to stop jueteng operations in their areas.

Regarding calls for the government to legalize jueteng, Ermita said such proposals had been made since he was a member of Congress in the 1990s.

"Maybe it can be legalized, if only to avoid scandal," he said, adding that he favored such proposals.

He also said this was the government's intention in setting up lotto operations—"to show that certain benefits like employment and earnings can be derived from legal numbers games."

But he stressed that he was speaking for himself, having been a member of Congress.

ARROYO: Departing from arrival area. PDI PHOTO

Big Mike makes hasty retreat to Singapore

From page A1

boarding for Singapore Airlines' flight SQ 071, which took off at around 8:25 a.m. He passed through the arrival area, using what airport insiders call the "counterflow" route, Naia sources told the INQUIRER.

The other passengers of the flight were told to take the east concourse leading to Gate 3.

Arroyo did not proceed to the Dignitaries Lounge despite a reservation in the spacious area where VIPs and their guests often stay before their departure or arrival.

VIPs, especially government officials, are also normally the last passengers to board a flight.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he was not aware of Arroyo's departure.

In a phone patch interview with reporters, Ermita said he did not know whether the information that Arroyo had left was true.

"There is nothing I can confirm. I don't know anything at all," he said.

Short vacation

Arroyo's spokesperson and lawyer Jess Santos said the First Gentleman was just on a short vacation with his brother Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo and sister Marilou (not Marilyn, as earlier reported).

A source in Arroyo's camp said he was likely to return next week.

Santos dismissed talk that the sudden departure of Arroyo had to do with the latest controversy involving him.

"[The Arroyo siblings] have been planning since January to go on a trip together but they could not get their schedules right because the First Gentleman had to attend to his charities here and Representative Arroyo had work in Congress," Santos said in a phone interview.

"*Walang kinalaman ito sa mga alegasyon sa kanya*," Santos added.

Through Santos, the First Gentleman denied on Thursday having received any jueteng money, as alleged by one of three persons who said on Wednesday that they had given or collected protection money for him and his son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo.

Hide and seek

The INQUIRER reporter and photographer waited for Arroyo at the Naia as early as 7 a.m. in an effort to secure an interview over the jueteng allegations.

A handful of Presidential Security Group men were seen at the Dignitaries Lounge and near the east concourse area.

By 7:45 a.m., Arroyo had yet to arrive at the Dignitaries Lounge.

A reliable airport source tipped the INQUIRER that Arroyo might go straight to Gate 3.

After proceeding to the gate and waiting for several minutes, the INQUIRER learned from the airline staff that Arroyo had requested early boarding and was already in the aircraft.

"That's his discretion, actually," the source said later.

Manila International Airport Authority general manager Alfonso Cusi, a close friend of Arroyo's, said the latter was "accorded the normal VIP process."

He also said Arroyo had requested early boarding.

Cusi arrived at around 7:30 a.m. at the Dignitaries Lounge with assistant general managers Angel Atutubo and Octavio Lina for what he said was a "security inspection."

The officials exchanged pleasantries with officers of the Transportation Security Administration at the lounge.

INQUIRER photographer Rudy Esperas said he was later asked by Cusi not to take pictures of the First Gentleman.

Ready for inquiry

Asked to comment on Sen. Panfilo Lacson's statement that Arroyo should be invited to the Senate investigation on jueteng operations, Santos said his client was ready to face any inquiry in the interest of bringing out the truth and seeking justice: "*Pupunta kami kung kailangang pumunta.*"

But he pointed out that Lacson himself had noted that Arroyo's accusers had no direct evidence to pin down the First Gentleman and his son.

Santos said the group behind the allegations wanted to "soil the good name of a good man."

He said the latest accusation against Arroyo was "coordinated, premeditated and well-planned" by this group. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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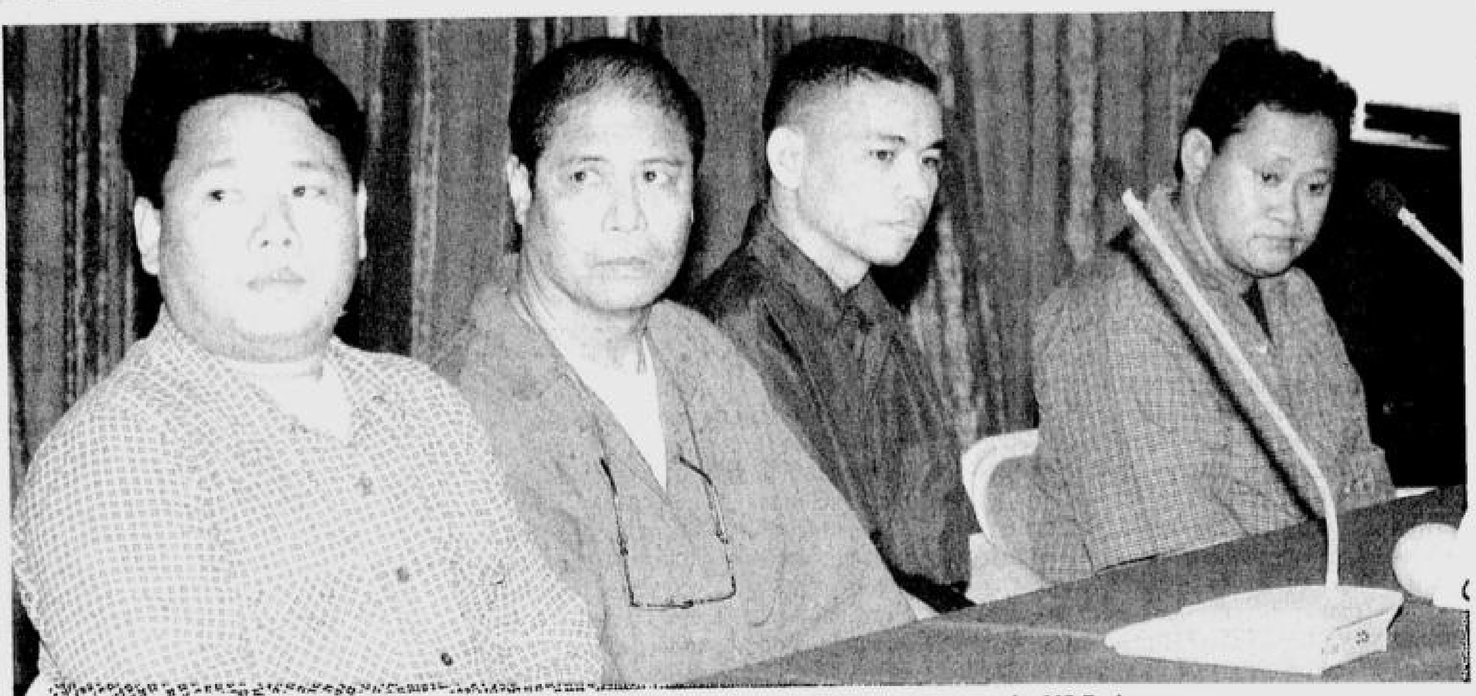


DUBBED as heroes of the environment, the four Filipino seamen make a brief appearance at the US Embassy. RUDY ESPERAS

US makes 4 RP seamen rich as environment heroes

From page A1

anymore," Ruth Urry of the embassy's public affairs office told the INQUIRER, fending off reporters' efforts to talk with the four seamen.

In a brief talk with reporters, one of the seamen quipped that they would just "hide" after receiving their money. Another said his family might start a business.

Sanchez said they were compelled to report the actions of their vessel in September last year because they "have to protect the environment."

Other side of friendship

For Mussomeli, the Filipinos' bravery reflected "the other side" of the bilateral relationship between the United States and the Philippines: This time it was the American government and its people that found themselves benefiting from the acts of Filipinos.

"Today ... we see the other side of the relationship. Today we are here simply and gratefully to show our appreciation for four common, everyday Filipinos who showed an extraordinary amount of courage and integrity, and in doing so came to the aid of the American people and the American government," Mussomeli said.

'Courageous, honorable'

Since the Los Angeles US Attorney's Office considered the case significant, the seamen were awarded the maximum reward allowable under the US law.

Mussomeli quipped that with what the seamen did, it would be "very difficult for them to ever be rehired as seafarers."

"Courageous and honorable, these men took actions that demonstrated the innate decency and integrity of Filipino workers, and why they are so prized and eagerly sought throughout the world," Mussomeli said.

Dumping wastes

The four Filipinos reported to the US Coast Guard that between February 2004 and September 2004, MV Katerina, a 600-foot, 16,320-ton vessel, dumped large amounts of oil waste into the ocean.

According to the seamen, the vessel used an elbow pipe and a "magic pipe" to bypass the device used to separate oil and other wastes from water.

In letters to the US Coast Guard, Sanchez, Piamonte and Tolentino outlined the Katerina's violations and provided a diagram that showed where the hidden pipes were stored.

Ship's cook

The Coast Guard later recruited Santillan, the ship's cook, who further outlined other violations.

The ship's captain, Ioannis Kallikis, Chief Engineer Eduardo Guinto, and Second Engineer Rolan Sullesta were convicted.

DST Shipping Inc. was also fined $1 million for the violation.

Public airs anger over VIP security …

From page A1

The listeners suggested that top government officials could do the public a favor by taking a chopper or better yet, take flight with Darna.

What got the ire of listeners of a morning radio program at dzBB was a complaint from a motorist that security escorts of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez pointed their guns at him when he overtook their two-car convoy that was traveling slowly from Edsa to White Plains in Pasig.

The on-air discussion between the caller—a certain Jo—and Ding Roman, a security aide of Gonzalez, triggered a barrage of complaints from motorists who claimed they too were victimized by abusive security escorts who are supposed to be "public servants" as the officials they guard.

Roman was insisting that upon seeing a convoy of government men, motorists should do well to get out of the way. But this comment only resulted in radio anchor Alice Sotto blurting out at Roman: "You speak as if you own the road."

Still, Roman stuck to his guns, saying this was the practice and when co-anchor Arnold Clavio disagreed, Roman said: "If Arnold is saying that, I dare him to do it to the (Presidential Security Group) and we will see what they will do to him."

When Clavio asked what he meant to say, Roman declined to answer. Sotto said Roman could be saying that the PSG would shoot down a motorist who gets in the way.

He then dared the caller to sue him before the DOJ.

Listeners who sent their comments by text message said that like everyone else, nongovernment men are also in a hurry. They advised officials of government and their escorts to leave their homes early so they will not be late for their meetings.

Contacted by the INQUIRER, Gonzalez said he was reading when the incident reportedly happened at 9 a.m. last Thursday.

He also denied knowing Roman, explaining he only knows his escorts by their faces. But he denied that his men pointed their guns at the motorist.

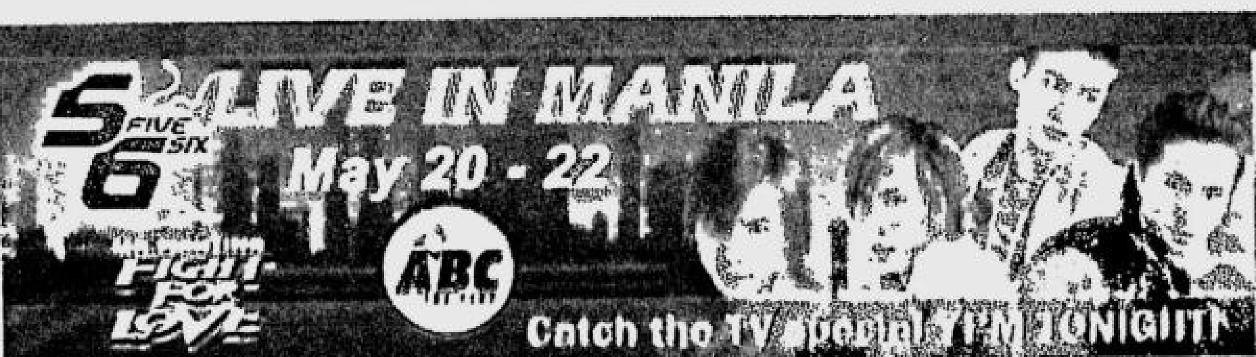
"If people are complaining about the sirens and blinkers, then all Cabinet men should take them off," he said, adding that compared to other Cabinet men who are escorted by up to five-car convoys and motorcycle policemen, his one-car escort is considered acceptable.

He said although it is his nature to want to be treated as if he was "above ordinary mortals," he said Cabinet men do need escorts because they have work schedules "that is not usual to ordinary people ... who can dictate their time."

As to the suggestion that they take a helicopter so as not to burden ordinary motorists, Gonzalez shrugged it off as "a very ridiculous" proposal.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE



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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Entertainment Konek				Kayo Mo Ba 'To		Nginiig: The Hidden Files		Star Dance		Quizon Avenue		TV Patrol World	Magandang Gabi Bayan		Star Cinema Presents			Kontrobersyal (11:45PM)
ABC 5	Trip Ko 'To	The Basketball Show		Soccer Showdown		Loren		Diretsahan		Viva Box Office				Sing Galing		Maverick & Ariel	Onstage		
GMA 7	Startalk			Wish Ko Lang		Wag Kukurap	Pinoy Pop Superstar		Bitoy's Funniest Videos		Extra Challenge		Imbestigador		Idol Ko Si Kap			Showbiz Stripped	
RPN 9		Global Window		Biyaheng Langit	Kids TV	Hanapbuhay Overseas		Isumbong mo kay Tulfo		Medical Investigation		CSI: Miami		Saturday Night Playhouse				Money Talk	
IBC 13		Home Shopping Network			Good Take	Home Shopping Network		Lifestyle		Tiger Stars				Bitag		In The Corner		Alamin Ang Diabetes	
JackTV		Worst Case Scenario		Cheat	Filter	Samurai Jack	X-Men	Justice League Unlimited	The Batman	WWE Bottomline		Wwe Raw				Drawn Together	The Man Show	Primetime Glick	Beat The Geeks
Nickelodeon	Girls In Love	Kenan & Kel	As Told By Ginger	Snick: Unfabulous (New)/All Grown Up/ My Dad The Rock Star/ Drake & Josh				Danny Phantom	My Life As A Teenage Robot	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	Sabrina, The Teenage Witch	Cow At The Moo-vies	Girls In Love	Kenan & Kel	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Presents		Top Of The Pops	MYX Remakes	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Club MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX		MYX Live!	
ETC		Saturday Night Live		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Joan Of Arcadia		The O.C.		Queer eye For The Straight Guy		Last Comic Standing		Saturday Night Live		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One	Singles				Three Seasons				My Movie				Dobol Trobol		Boy Chico, Hulihin Ben Tumbling				
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Sports TV	Mr. Bean	7th Heaven	Gilmore Girls (7:45 PM)		The Bachelor (8:40 PM)		Studio 23 Present				Real Deal
AXN									E Buzz	30 Seconds To Fame		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)					
Star World		Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	Weird TV	Miami Vice		Monk		Roswell		Enterprise		TNA Xplosion		Wow! The Most Awesome Acts On Earth I/ Saturday Shockumentaries		Dog The Bounty Hunter	Cops	The Kumars At No. 42	Arrested Development
CNN	Diplomatic License	World News	World Business This Week	World News	People In The News	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News	CNN Business Traveller	World News	Design 360	World News	Talk Asia	World News	The Daily Show With John Stewart: Global Edition	CNN Presents: A Rising Tide: The Threat Of Global Warming	
National Geographic		Big Bite Nite				Big Cat Challenge		Creature Feature				Be The Creature		The Snake Wranglers	Wildlife Diary	Big Bite Nite			
Solar Sports						IBF Japan Open '05		ATP World Team C'ship '05 Finals							NBA Playoffs Conf. S'finals Game6				
Lifestyle Network	Carol Duvall	HGTV Special		Radical Sabbatical	Road & Track	Genuine Article	Food Fight	Date Plate	Emeril Live		Nigella Bites	How Do I Look		NY Fashion Week	Modern Girl's Guide	E! True Hollywood Story		Look For Less	Behind The Velvet Ropes
HBO	Clueless (2:35PM)			Short Circuit (4:10 PM)			Post Impact (5:45 PM)				Street Fighter - The Ultimate Battle (7:20 PM)	S.W.A.T		Mona Lisa Smile				Six Feet Under 48. Grinding The Corn	The Frighteners (11:45PM)
Star Movies			Hollywood One On One	Hope Springs			Death Becomes Her (5:35 PM)				Blue Streak (7:20PM)			True Lies					Assassination Tango
Cartoon Network		The Detective Squad	Tom & Jerry Show	Swat Kats	Duck Dodgers	Xiaolin Showdown	Winx Club	Atomic Betty	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Teen Titans				Cartoon Cartoon Show	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Duck Dodgers	Codename: Kids Next Door	Samurai Jack	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
ESPN	World Snooker Tour Welsh Open '05						Soccer FIFA Fever	Boxing Series Friday Night Fights				Classic Boxing Ali vs. J. Quarry II		NBA Playoffs Conf. S'finals Game6			World Pool League '04 Warsaw, Poland		
Disney Channel	Potatoes And Dragons	Sabrina, The Animated Series	The Legend Of Tarzan	Wicked Science	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	That's So Raven	American Dragon	Phil Of The Future	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney			Dave The Barbarian	Mr. Bean	America's Funniest Home Video	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax				Stranger At The Door			Dragnet (5:45 PM)				Momentum			Forever Young			House Of 1000 Corpses		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Shattered City				Shattered City				Annie's Point				The Odyssey			The Odyssey (10:35PM)		
Discovery Channel		Human Discovery		Science Frontiers		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery				Rides		Mummy Autopsy		Extreme Discovery	
Sports Plus						Inside the PGA	TV Shopping	Chevy American Highlights		Bikini Destination		World's Greatest Auto Shows		The Search TV		Bank of America Colonial Day2			

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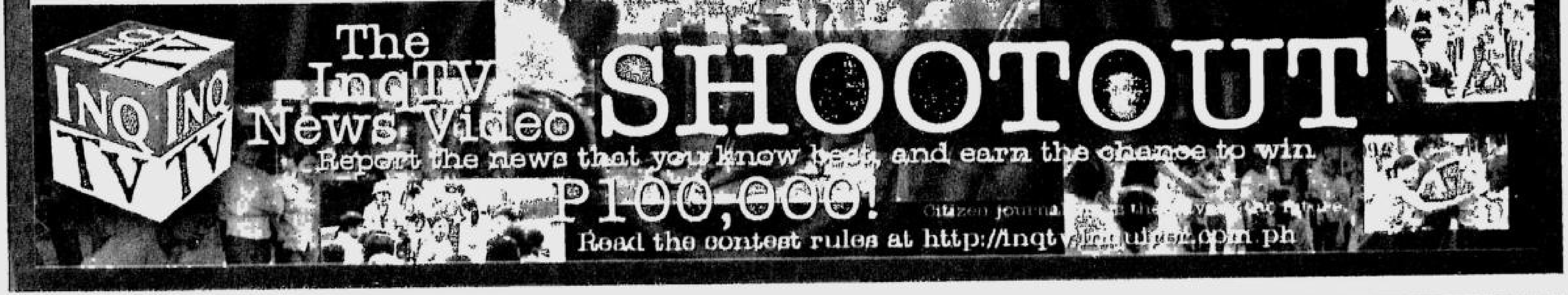

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Mayor bats for co-ownership of dump

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

METRO Manila mayors hard pressed for solutions in complying with Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, may find an answer to their problems in the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility in Rodriguez, Rizal Province.

"Since many of the mayors had been supportive of the facility, I am offering them a chance at co-ownership," Rodriguez (formerly Montalban) Mayor Pedro Cuerpo said in an interview.

Being co-owners of the facility would enable cities and towns in the metropolis to comply with the law, which mandates that each local government unit must have its own landfill, with the impending closure of open dumps in 2006.

"Metro Manila cities and towns do not have enough space for a landfill," Cuerpo added.

The Rodriguez garbage facility is now the destination of about 1,500 tons of daily garbage from nine cities and towns in Metro Manila.

But this is still way below the 2,500 tons a day capacity of the facility, Cuerpo said. "At present, the facility has not yet been fully utilized," he added, saying that too little garbage would not make operating the facility a viable venture.

The benefits of Cuerpo's co-ownership proposal?

Cities and towns would be able to comply with the law, while the small town of Rodriguez would be assured that the facility would continue its operations.

"Our huge investments in the facility will go to waste if the operations stop," Cuerpo added.

Still, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority is looking for other places to host another disposal facility for Metro Manila wastes.

"We won't stop looking for new sites," said MMDA deputy chair Cesar Lacuna.

The controlled dumps being used by the MMDA, like that in Payatas, Quezon City and Tanza, Navotas, are set to close by the end of the year. Lacuna, however, clarified that reopening the San Mateo landfill was not a priority.

The San Mateo local government had earlier sent a proposal to the MMDA to reopen part of the landfill, which used to serve Metro Manila until it was ordered closed in 2000.

The proposal quickly fanned suspicions that San Mateo town officials were again setting its eyes on accommodating trash from Metro Manila, enough to alarm Rodriguez officials.

But San Mateo municipal secretary Rey Torrato said the proposal to reopen part of the landfill was meant to take in only locally generated garbage. The MMDA is still the operator of the landfill, although Lacuna said they could not act on the request just yet.

He said that while reopening the landfill would be a great help in garbage disposal, the Supreme Court's temporary restraining order against any reopening of the 103-hectare landfill still stands.

Markets new target of fake bills syndicate

By Margaux C. Ortiz

COUNTERFEITERS have found a new way to distribute their "goods".

National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) officials said yesterday, syndicates are now "distributing" fake bills in markets and "sari-sari" (variety) stores instead of big establishments like malls and department stores.

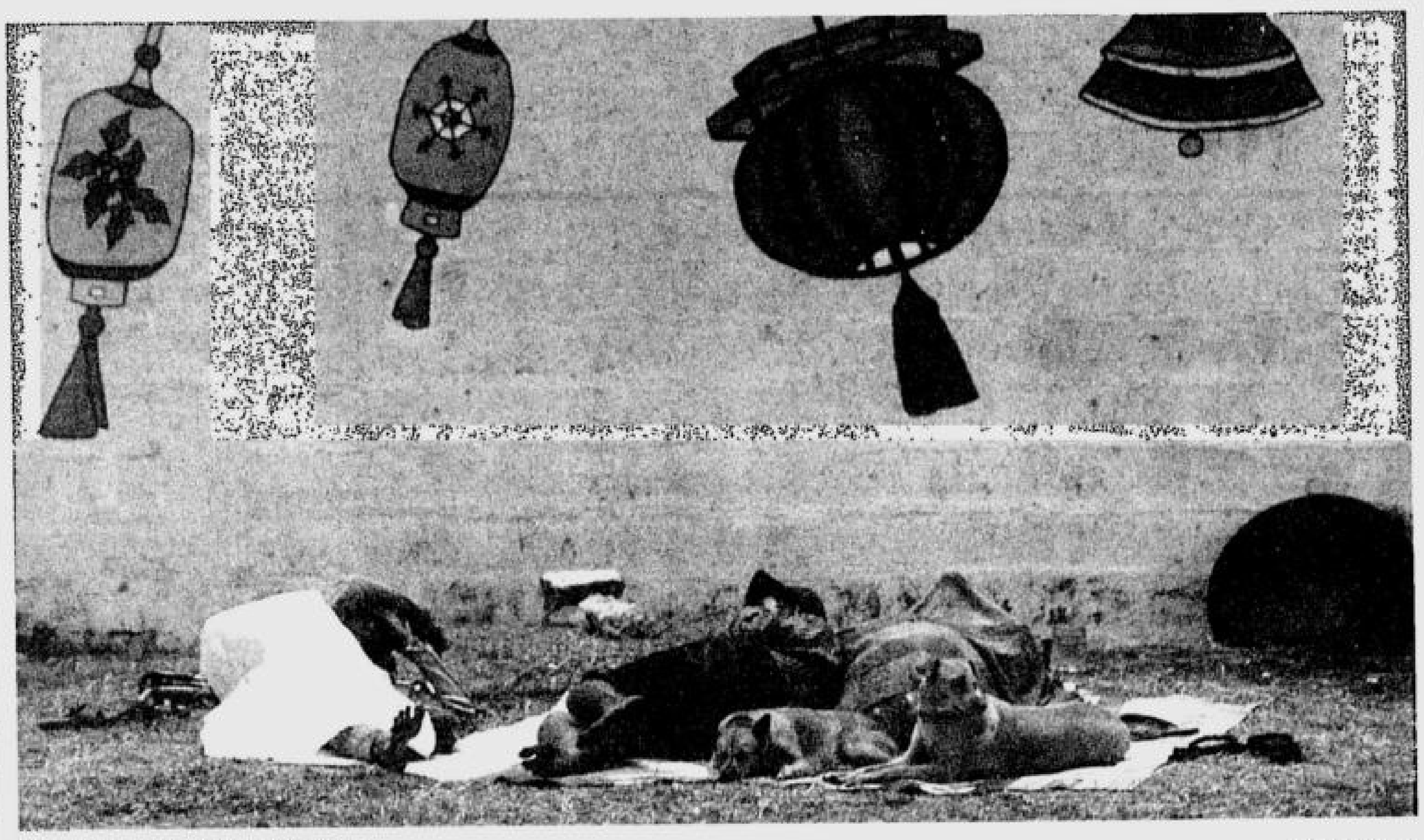
Lawyer Elfren Meneses Jr., chief of the NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division (AFCCD), said unlike last year when hundreds of P1,000 bills were confiscated, counterfeiters arrested earlier this week yielded lesser denominations.

Meneses said "P1,000 bills have more security features and are harder to distribute among middle-class and poor folk."

Counterfeiters, he added, employed "passers," poor people willing to distribute the counterfeit bills in markets, sari-sari stores, and flea markets. "Passers" would purchase goods with fake P500, P200 or P100 bills. They would return the change to the syndicate as "payment," Meneses said. The AFCCD chief said small-time vendors lacked the equipment to check the authenticity of bills.

He urged barangay chairs to coordinate with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) so they could educate their constituents on how to detect counterfeit money. "The barangay chiefs would be provided with brochures containing information on how to avoid being duped by counterfeiters," Meneses said, adding seminars would also help market and sari-sari vendors.

NBI agents arrested Josephine Mallari, of Daang Bakal, Marulas, Valenzuela City; Nimfa Cardenas, of Dino St., San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City; Josefina Tanega, of Interior Bagbag, Novaliches, Quezon City; Rita Amba, of Serrano Subdivision, Valenzuela City; and Gerry Cabante, of Little Tagaytay, Valenzuela City.



(NOT SO) SWEET DREAMS
A homeless family finds a place to sleep beside the wall of a carnival site in Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

VAL HANDUMON

MMDA files motion on illegal parking case in SC

By Fran Katigbak

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority yesterday filed a motion for reconsideration on a Supreme Court decision regarding a complaint filed against the agency by a lawyer accused of illegal parking.

Dante Garin filed the case in 1995 after an MMDA traffic enforcer confiscated his license for illegal parking. The RTC ruled in favor of Garin, and barred the MMDA from taking drivers' licenses during apprehension.

"The Supreme Court invoked the Bel-Air (subdivision) case, which said the MMDA has no legislative powers," said lawyer Emmanuel de Castro, MMDA chief of legal service. In 1996, Bel-Air filed a case against the MMDA, saying the agency could not take over the streets of the posh subdivision. De Castro said the MMDA has the right to promulgate rules and regulations based on the mandate provided in RA 7924, or the Metro Manila Development Authority Act, which includes the agency's major functions.

"We are not asserting the power to legislate but we want the public to know, through the Supreme Court, that the MMDA has the power to promulgate rules and regulations," De Castro said. Last month, the SC upheld a Parañaque court decision stopping the MMDA from confiscating driver's licenses without giving the violator due process.

The high court said the matter was already moot and academic because the MMDA no longer confiscates licenses of traffic violators.

Manila scrapping tax on local films

By Tina G. Santos

TO HELP save the "dying" local film industry, the Manila city government plans to scrap the amusement tax on ticket sales for local films shown in the capital's movie houses.

At the same time, Mayor Lito Atienza announced that the city government was not holding the Manila Film Festival (MFF), the country's oldest and most prestigious film festival, launched by the late Mayor Antonio Villegas.

The MFF is part of the city's celebration of Araw ng Maynila on June 24.

"We will postpone this year's film festival because holding it may not be really accomplishing our objective—which is to help the local film industry," he said.

"The problem is, the local film industry is one of the highest-taxed industries, if not the highest. How can it survive if the government keeps imposing higher taxes?" he added. "We will work it out so that all local films shown in Manila will enjoy full tax exemption."

Atienza said the full amusement tax exemption would be provided in an ordinance to be proposed to the City Council.

The mayor said with this move, he expected the suffering local movie industry to get "a well deserved break," at least in Manila.

Lanot family appeals for swift justice

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE FAMILY of slain former congressman Henry Lanot is still waiting for justice more than a month after he was gunned down inside a Pasig City restaurant.

And his eldest son Ken Lanot is alarmed. "We are worried about the possibility of a whitewash," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

He said he was concerned that, while other high-profile killings had been solved, his father's killers remain free.

Ken appealed to the police and the media not to forget the unsolved murder. Lanot was gunned down while eating lunch inside a restaurant on April 13. The gunman casually walked out and got on a passenger jeepney after the murder, police said.

His family and supporters quickly charged the killing was politically motivated.

Lanot ran for mayor last year but lost to Vicente Eusebio. He protested Eusebio's victory, alleging massive vote-buying and early campaigning. His case is pending before the Supreme Court.

Eusebio was abroad during the killing, but his son, Bobby, a councilor, quickly denied allegations they were behind the murder. Police had released sketches of the killer. But no one has been identified or arrested so far.

Corruption demoralizes AFP officers

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

IF YOU hear grumblings or rumors of another uprising within the military similar to the Oakwood Mutiny, blame it on fiscal mismanagement of some top officials of the Armed Forces.

Some military officers I've talked with complain they have not received their gasoline allocations for several months now.

"I don't know where our (bosses) put the money for the gasoline. The previous leaderships never touched our gas allocations," said a Army major assigned at Camp Aguinaldo.

The Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP), the military's premier intelligence unit, has not been working as efficiently as before because it has no operating funds.

The intelligence funds intended for its informers have not been released for several months now, said an ISAFP officer.

Because ISAFP has not been paying its informers (their glorified name is secret agent), the unit has not received vital intelligence information from the field.

Result: many soldiers have been killed in ambuscades the past few months because they didn't receive prior intelligence reports.

ISAFP informers within the New People's Army (NPA) and Moro rebels withheld information from their military handlers because the allowances were suddenly cut off. The allowances were coursed through their families or close friends.

Some insiders say the money intended for ISAFP operating expenses and gasoline allocations of top and middle-level military officers has been diverted to the *pabaon* (send-off gift) for a retiring military officer.

If President Macapagal-Arroyo, AFP commander in chief, wants to win the respect and sympathy of the middle-level and junior officers, she should immediately order an investigation.

* * *

The country's Catholic Church has admitted that some priests got money from "jueteng" lords to finance construction of churches and charity projects.

So, what's new?

Retired Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin once admitted that the Church received huge amounts of money from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) for its charity projects.

And yet, the good cardinal always made a punching bag of Pagcor in his homilies. He said Pagcor was destroying the people's moral fiber through gambling.

* * *

And now, a disclaimer: I don't own any towing service company.

I have received reports that a towing service firm has been saying that I am part owner of the company.

I am neither connected nor part owner of the towing firm. I heard that some abusive employees of the firm have been using my name. Some motorists have complained their vehicles were towed for small traffic infractions by this firm.

Still others complain they didn't commit any traffic violation at all. Their vehicles were just towed at the whim of abusive employees of this towing firm.

May I ask the complainants to come see me at my office so I can help them file complaints against the towing firm.

My office is on the 5th floor of the Citystate Center Building, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City.

METROBRIEFS

Billboard fee hike in Mandaluyong

THE MANDALUYONG City government is charging an additional P120 per square meter of billboard as advertising fee, the city public information office reported yesterday. This is in addition to the P20 per square meter installation fee the city business permits and licenses office is currently charging for billboards. The city government stands to earn an additional P1.2 million every year from outdoor advertising. There are now 73 registered billboards in Mandaluyong City. The new advertising rates are expected to start next month. Huge billboards have long been criticized for posing risks to motorists and commuters .

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Navotas Cleanest and Greenest for 2004

AN INTENSIFIED segregation program using the services of 500 volunteers made the municipality of Navotas the National Capital Region's Cleanest and Greenest for 2004, according to the town's head of the Information and Sanitation Office. Lito Osete. "Oplan Kalinisan" was implemented by City Mayor Toby Tiangco to inculcate cleanliness and discipline in residents. The ISO head added that the strict implementation of waste segregation was another reason for the program's success. It was the third win for the municipality which also bagged the top environment award in 2001 and 2003.

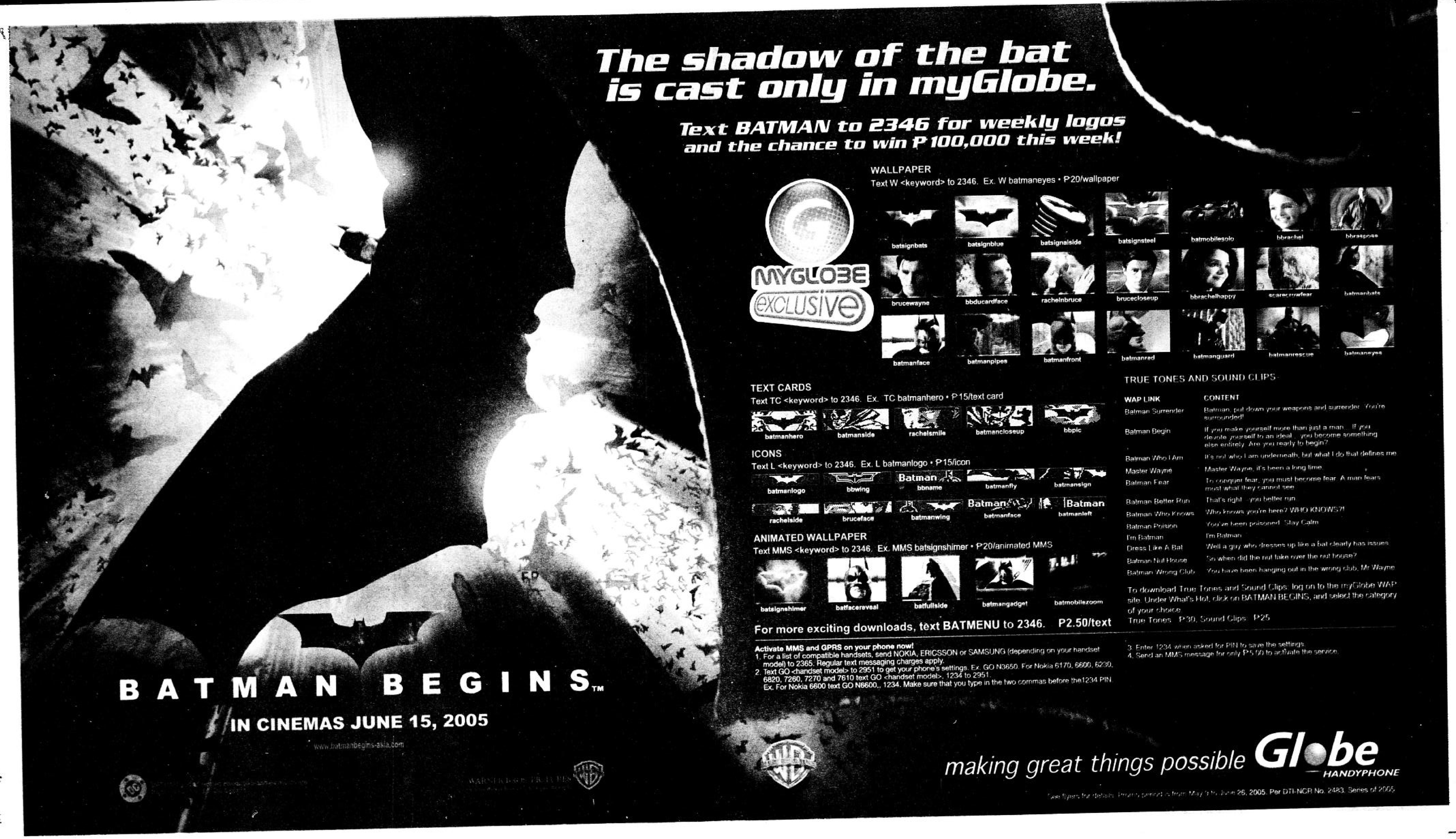
Nancy C. Carvajal

Mapua alumni homecoming

THE NATIONAL Association of Mapua Alumni (NAMA) will hold its grand alumni homecoming today at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Ortigas Center. Registration starts at 5 p.m. NAMA president Hernando "Nando" Limsin and first vice president and overall chairperson Dolores "Dolly" Legaspi-Lim, said the theme of this year's event is "I am proud to be a Mapuan." The reunion will be highlighted by the presentation of the prestigious "The Outstanding Mapuan" (TOM) award for 2005. There will be seven overseas and seven local TOM awardees. The Jubilarians—Golden (Class 1955) and Silver (Class 1980)—will also be honored. All Mapua alumni who wish to attend may contact Rose Cruz (NAMA) office at tel. no. 527-1134 or Romina Apo at tel. no. 939-4477.

Flores de Mayo at Arroceros

MARIAN devotees and nature lovers are invited to the Arroceros Forest Park's Maytime fiesta on Sunday, May 29, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will be sponsored by the Winner Foundation, the caretakers and developers of the Arroceros Forest Park. The highlight of the Sunday celebration in the Forest Park will be the Flores de Mayo procession at 3 p.m. with former Congressman Joaquin R. Roces as Hermano Mayor and his wife, Lita B. Roces, as the Hermana Mayor of the traditional procesion in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Roces is a native Manileño who served as the Second District's (now the Third District) Representative of Manila for 16 years. Young girls (ages 4 to 18) who wish to join the Flores de Mayo procession are requested, but not required, to wear white dresses or blouses.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TRUE TONES AND SOUND CLIPS

WAP LINK	CONTENT
Batman Surrender	Batman, put down your weapons and surrender. You're surrounded!
Batman Begin	If you make yourself more than just a man... If you devote yourself to an ideal... you become something else entirely. Are you ready to begin?
Batman Who I Am	It's not who I am underneath, but what I do that defines me.
Master Wayne	Master Wayne, it's been a long time.
Batman Fear	To conquer fear, you must become fear. A man fears most what they cannot see.
Batman Better Run	That's right... you better run.
Batman Who Knows	Who knows you're here? WHO KNOWS?!
Batman Poision	You've been poisoned. Stay Calm.
I'm Batman	I'm Batman.
Dress Like A Bat	Well a guy who dresses up like a bat clearly has issues.
Batman Nut House	So when did the nut take over the nut house?
Batman Wrong Club	You have been hanging out in the wrong club, Mr Wayne.

To download True Tones and Sound Clips, log on to the myGlobe WAP site. Under What's Hot, click on BATMAN BEGINS, and select the category of your choice.

True Tones: P30, Sound Clips: P25

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Veteran Thai wrests lead

ROGER MARGALLO

AUSTRALIAN Andrew Buckle hits his approach on No. 10.

By Musong R. Castillo

LIPA CITY—Forty-nine and looking to take the next step, Boonchu Ruangkit put himself in position to win the Philippine Open for the first time and come up with the perfect encore to one of the most remarkable careers Thailand has ever seen.

Despite an aching right knee, Ruangkit handled the gusts right and putted with caution yesterday to shoot a three-under-par 68 and grab a one-stroke lead over Andrew Buckle halfway through the 89th edition of Asia's oldest golf championship.

Ruangkit, Thailand's Putra Cup hero in the 1980s and a contemporary of the great and absent Frankie Miñoza, gunned down five birdies against two bogeys in a 34-34 round at the Malarayat's composite course here for a 138 total.

Already looking at trying his luck in the American Senior PGA, Ruangkit wheeled into position to win this event which has not been kind to him in the past.

"I have played here many times with no success, not even close," said Ruangkit, a 13-year veteran of the Asian Tour and winner of the Thailand Open last year, through an interpreter.

Former RP Open champion Cassius Casas submitted a second straight 70 and American Ron Won had a level 71 to catch local amateur hotshot Juvic Pagunsan in third with 142 totals. Pagunsan, the second placer last year, turned in a 72.

The Aussie Buckle couldn't recover from a bad start, shooting a 73 to trail Ruangkit by one heading into the final 36 holes of the event co-presented by San Miguel and ICTSI.

It was not only splendid play that characterized Day 2 after Japanese Koji Katoh was disqualified by the tournament committee. He would have been the new leader had his 67 counted.

The late-starting Katoh was banished from the

VETERAN/ A26

Second round scores

138—B. Ruangkit(Th) 68-70

139—A. Buckle (Aus) 66-73

140— J. Pagunsa (a)68-72, R. Won (US) 69-71, C. Casas 70-70;

141—J. Wither (Scot) 68-73, D. Griff (Can) 69-72, R. Gibson (Can) 71-70, A. Le Vesconte (Aus) 71-70, J. Luprian (Ger) 71-70, G. Morales(Ven) 71-70, C. Gill (Eng) 72-69

142—S. Srisa-Nga (Th) 67-75, B. Saltus (US) 74-68, C. Rodgers (Eng) 69-73, G. Rosales 69-73, R. Pagunsan 70-72, A. Zahari (MAL) 70-70, A. Singh (IND) 72-70

143—A. Blyth (Aus) 68-75, A. Que 68- 75, C. Travers (Aus) 68-75, D. Chia (Mal) 72-71, A. Lascuña 72-71, P. Spargo (Aus) 72-71, S. Hussein (Mal) 73-70

144—J. Lyle (Aus) 70-74, H. Takeuchi (J) 71-73, Hsieh TS (Tpe) 71-73, J. Dawes (Aus) 72-72, W. Artjanawat(Tha) 73-71, W Aung (Mya) 73-71, J. Bayron (a) 76-68;

145—J. Chitprasong (Tha) 71-74, A. Prathummanee (Tha) 71-74, J. Stewart (HK) 71-74, Ming GC (a](Kor) 71-74, A. Cruz 72-73, K. Horne (SA) 72-73, R. Nachimuthu (Mal) 72-73, M. Pucay 72-73, A. Rohana (SL) 72-73, J. O'Sullivan (AUS) 72-73, A. Quiroz (Mex) 72-73, C. Nirat (Th) 73-72, A. Pitts (US) 73-72, F. Ali (Ind) 73-72, Lam CB (SIN) 74-71, R. Hodgetts (Aus) 75-70, A. Murakami (a) 75-70

146—S. Kapur (IND) 70-76, S. Taylor (US) 70-76, R. Bckwell (Aus) 71-75, LEE S K (Kor) 71-75, V. Bhandari (Ind) 72-74, O. Nordberg (Swe) 73-73, A. Kang (US) 77-69, A. Groom (Aus) 78-68, Kao BS (Tpe) 78-68;

147—Sung MC (Tpe) 69-78, U. Duangdecha (Th) 72-75, D. Fung (HK) 72-75, C. Warren (Aus) 73-74, D. Alaban (Aus) 73-74, G. Bondoc (a) 74-73, D. Singh (IND) 74-73, T. Bise (J) 75-72, C. La'O 75-72, E. Salvador 75-72, P. Tipsanit (Th) 75-72, M. Both (Aus 76-71, Lin WH (Tpe) 76-71, G. Rusnak (US) 76-71, B. Magada 76-71, O. Sumcad 78-69.

Today's pairings

7 a.m. - G. Rusnak (US), Sung MC (Tpe), P. Tipsanit (Th)
7:10 - C. Warren (Aus), O. Sumcad, D. Sing (Ind)
7:20 - Lin WH (Tpe), E. Salvador, U. Duangdecha (Th)
7:30 - C. La'O, M. Both (Aus), B. Magada
7:40 - D. Alaban (Aus), D. Fung (HK), G. Bondoc (a)
7:50 - T. Bise (J), R. Backwell (Aus), S. Taylor (US)
8:00 - A. Groom (Aus), A. Kang (US), S. Kapur (Ind)
8:10 - V. Bhandari (Ind), Lee SK (Kor), O. Nordberg (Swe)
8:20 - Kao BS (Tpe), J. Chitprasong (Th), M. Pucay
8:30 - A. Quiroz (Mex), K. Horne (SA), A. Murakami (a)
8:40 - J. Stewart (HK), A. Cruz, Cho MG (Kor)
8:50 - J. O'Sullivan (Aus), C. Nirat (Th), F. Ali (Ind)
9:00 - A. Pitts (US), A. Prathmumanee (Th), A. Rohana (SL)
9:10 - Lam CB (Sin), R. Nachimuto (Mal), R. Hodgetts (Aus)
9:20 - A. Wing (Mya), J. Dawes (Aus), Hsieh TS (Tpe)
9:30 - W. Artjanawat (Th), Jay Bayron (a), J. Lyle (Aus)
9:40 - H. Takeuchi (J), P. Spargo (Aus), A. Lascuña
9:50 - A. Blyth (Aus), C. Travers (Aus), A. Que
10:00 - D. Chia (Mal), S. Hussein (Mal), G. Rosales
10:10 - A. R. Zahari (Mal), C. Rodgers (Eng), S. Srisa-Nga (Th)
10:20 - A. Sing (Ind), B. Saltus (US), R. Pagunsan
10:30 - J. Lupprian (Ger), D. Griff (Can), J. Wither (Scot)
10:40 - C. Gill (Eng), G. Morales (Ven), A. Le Vesconte (Aus)
10:50 - R. Gibson (Can), R. Won (US), J. Pagunsan (a)
11:00 - F. Casas, A. Buckle (Aus), B. Ruangkit (Th)

Doyle, RP bets clinch Pro-Am

LIPA CITY—They came in all shapes and sizes.

Portly, rotund, slim, lanky, the athletic and the fit, some with sound golf swings but most of them armed with one good for moving earth.

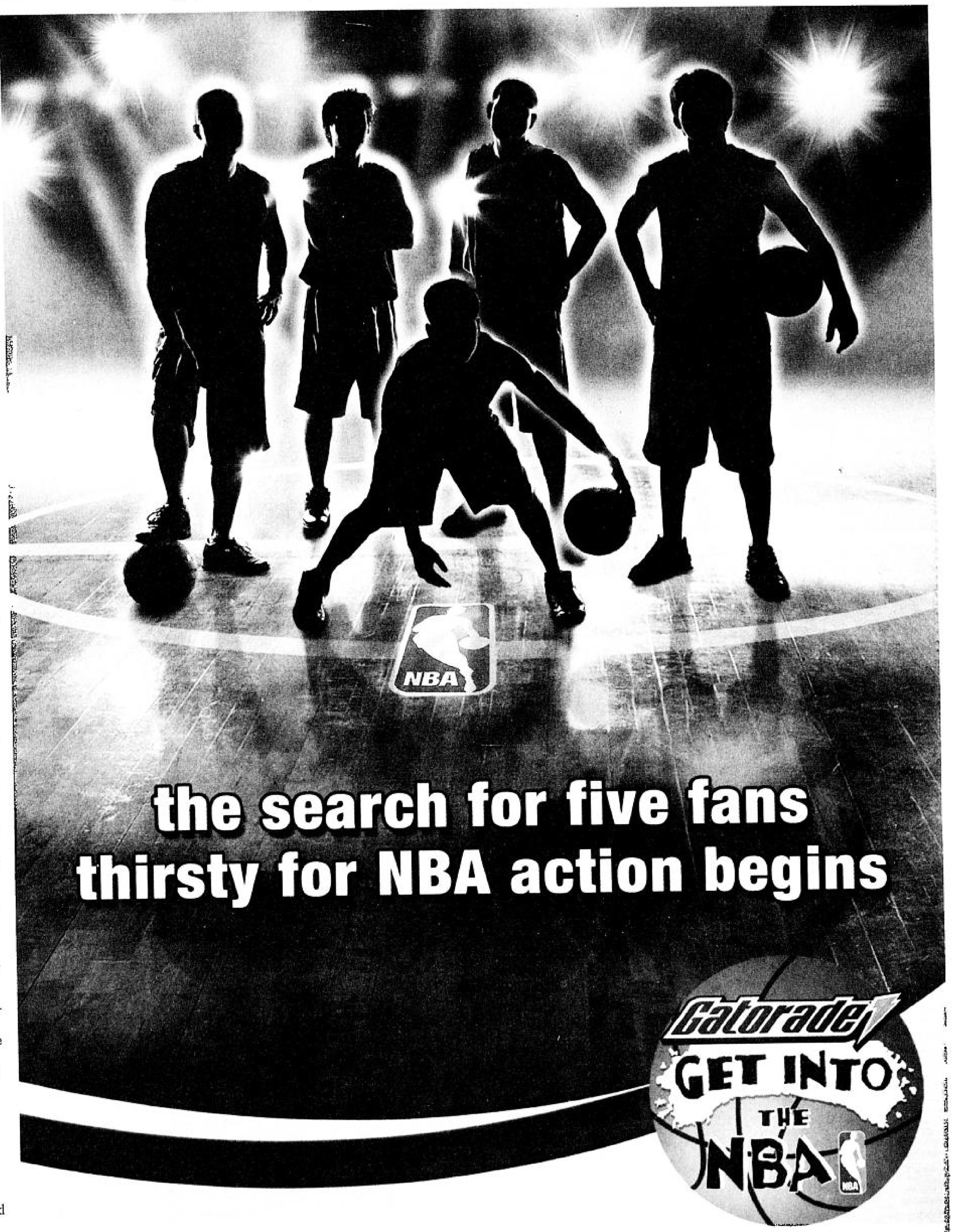
Whatever, the Celebrity Pro-Am of the 89th Philippine Open Wednesday proved to be a major success, not only on the fairways but in the awarding where prizes—which also came in all shapes and sizes—filled the ballroom.

Those who owned true golf talent walked away with the championship, but the excitement in the awarding will be hard to top, with showcases after showcases won by lucky participants.

Jayvee Marie Agojo and Anya Tanpinco, members of the Ladies' National Training Pool, together with Jun Agojo and pro partner Martin Doyle scored a net 26-under par 116 to win the tournament proper by one shot.

Gerald Rosales anchored the Asian Tour Team to a second place finish, while Olle Nordberg together with amateur partners Danny Pascual and Ernesto Salazar Sr. and Ernesto Salazar Jr. wound up third another shot back.

Musong R. Castillo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Spring Oil joins Taiwan cage tournament

TOP NBC (National Basketball Conference) contender Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna will see action in the annual Kwan Hu Club Invitational Cup basketball tournament on May 24-30 in Hwalin, Taiwan.

Composed of players and coaches from the NBC, the Cooking Oil Masters will slug it out against guest teams from Japan and Korea and five other Taiwanese clubs in the week-long tourney.

The 15-man team of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro includes Chris Corbin, Rodel Manuel, Mario Reyes, Marlon Kalaw, Robin Mendoza, Mel Latoreno, Nino Canaleta, Dennis Madrid, Samique Eman, Don Villamin and Richard Melencio.

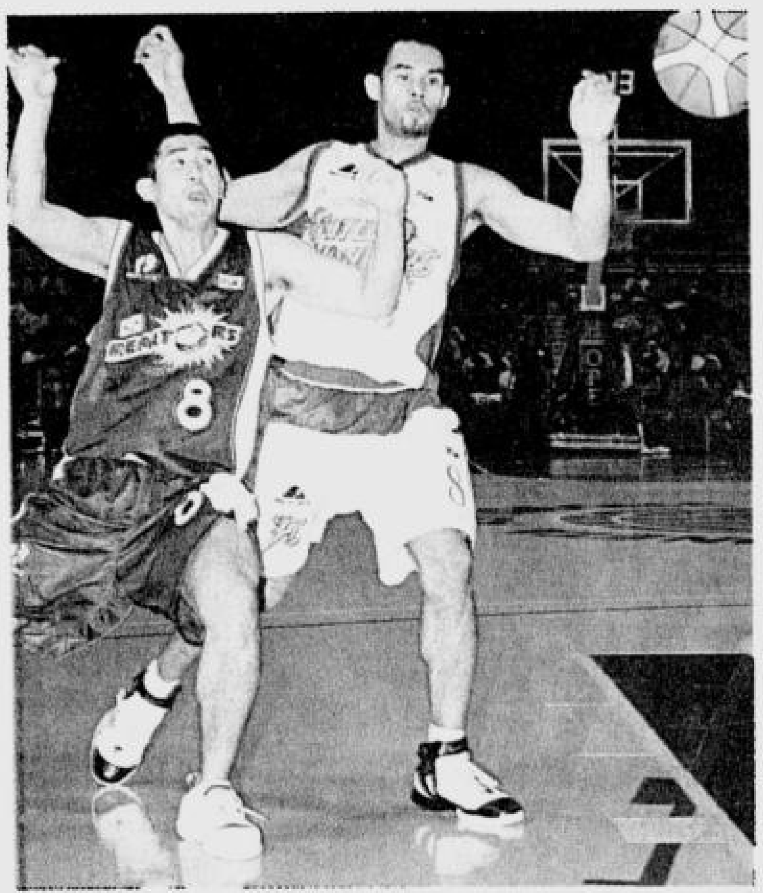
Former Spring Cooking Oil import Geremy Robinson will again reinforce the squad. The 6-foot-3 Robinson played for Spring in the 11th ABC Champion's Cup in Malaysia in 2002, averaging 36 points per game to finish second overall in scoring.

RP-BAP training team coach Boysie Zamar, Laguna-Spring's Vic Sanchez and Paul Advincula will make up the coaching staff, according to NBC secretary general Tito Palma.

"It is an honor for (our) team to be invited to this international tournament in Taiwan," chorused Padilla and Governor Lazaro. "We believe our boys have a good chance to pull some surprises."

Last October, Spring Oil-Laguna finished third in the 4th Shell Rimula X Grand Prix in Brunei Darussalam, ahead of two other teams from the PBA.

Aces stall Pals' No. 1 bid



PAOLO Mendoza (8) of Sta. Lucia and Ronald Tubid of Shell eye ball possession in their game last night. RUDY ESPERAS

GAME TODAY (USLS Gym, Bacolod City)
4 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Red Bull Barako

By June Navarro

MIKE Cortez shook off Donbel Belano and made the winning shot with 9.6 seconds left to carry Alaska to an 85-84 squeaker over Talk 'N Text last night in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome.

With 17 ticks remaining, Cortez dribbled the length of the court following two missed charities by Willie Miller, drove right and eluded Belano's sticky defense by going the other way for the game-winner.

Cortez's basket delayed the Phone Pals' bid to cement the No. 1 spot in the classification round of the eliminations and an outright semifinal berth while giving the Aces their 10th win against seven losses.

"It was truly an answered prayer," said Alaska coach Tim Cone after the Aces bounced back from two consecutive setbacks.

"It's been a struggle since we lost Brandon (Cablay). Without him, our rotation was screwed up lately," he added.

The Phone Pals, however, still remained on top after suffering their sixth loss in 17 games. Three straight turnovers by Talk 'N Text, two coming from Jerald Honeycutt allowed the Aces to crawl from 84-77 with less than two minutes left.

In the first game, Ajani Williams gave Shell enough reason for him to keep his job.

The 6-foot-10 Williams came out with his best performance yet, powering the Turbochargers past the Sta. Lucia Realtors, 75-65.

Williams banged in 28 points and hauled down 17 rebounds as the Turbochargers sprang back from a three-game losing streak.

Antoine Hayman, a 6-foot-10 enforcer who plays the post, has been trying out for the Turbochargers, but Williams was able to convince the Turbochargers that he's worth keeping.

"We're open to replacements as far as imports are concerned," said Shell coach Leo Austria. "If somebody better than Ajani comes along, then we have to replace him."

Though languishing at ninth place, Shell improved to 7-10 while snapping the Realtors' four-game winning run. The Realtors dropped to 9-8.

The scores:

First Game

SHELL 72—Williams 28, Tubid 9, Dela Cruz 8, Alvarez 6, Calaguio 6, Yap 6, Mamaril 5, Ferreria 2, Bajar 2, Sharma 0

STA. LUCIA 65—Espino 20, Omolon 16, Fletcher 13, Fernandez 9, Duremdes 5, Calimag 2, Santos 0, Tolomia 0, Gonzales 0, Demape 0, Mendoza 0

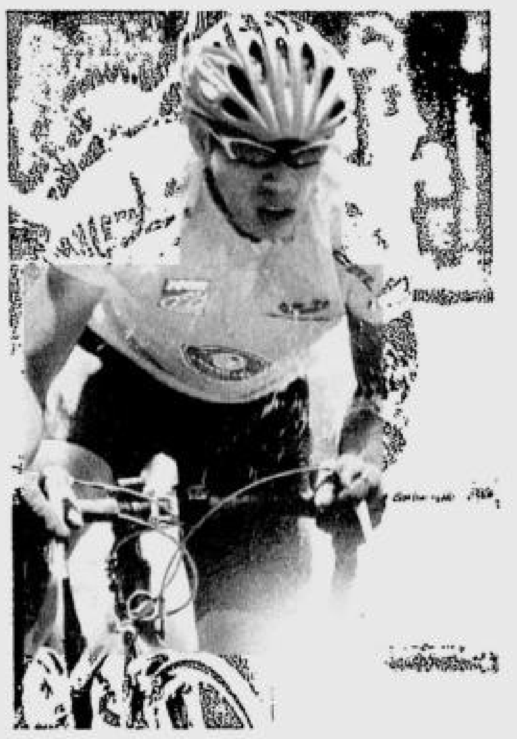
Quarters: 19-22, 39-38, 54-54, 72-65

Second Game

ALASKA 85—Simpkins 29, Cortez 19, Cariaso 10, Thoss 8, Hugnatan 8, Allado 7, Hawkins 4, Wilson 0, Padilla 0, Duat 0.

TALK 'N TEXT 84—Honeycutt 25, Miller 16, Belano 11, Alapag 9, Telan 9, Pablo 5, Carey 4, Camaso 3, Ravena 2, De Ocampo 0.

Quarters: 18-25, 42-41, 66-61, 85-84.



QUIRIMIT: Tour Pilipinas champ VAL HANDUMON

2 ex-champs head cast of Golden Tour

THE RACE for fame and fortune on two wheels gets going in four days with the Golden Tour 2005, a commemorative 10-stage event presented by Tanduay to mark the 50th anniversary of the fabled bikathon.

Former champions Warren Davadilla of the Centennial 1998 Tour and Arnel Quirimit of the Bert Lina/Air21 Tour Pilipinas era—head a star-studded cast of 81 riders vying for team, individual and special prizes in the May 26 to June 5 Golden Tour.

Reuben Pangan, president of the co-organizing group Dos-1, and Patrick Gregorio, of T&G Tourism and Development Corp., along with Tanduay's Dexter Te and Assistant Secretary Cynthia Carrion of the Department of Tourism, launched the Golden Tour yesterday afternoon at the Dragon Gate restaurant on Roxas Boulevard.

There will be nine teams of 81 riders in the Golden Tour cast, and aside from Davadilla and Quirimit, the other rated entries are Tour Pilipinas Sprint King Enrique Domingo, Santy Barnachea, Lito Atilano, Frederick Feliciano, Baler Ravina, Eusebio Quiñones and Reynaldo Navarro.

All were designated skippers of the nine teams—Guerrero Brandy, Colt 45, Go21, Touch Mobile, PLDT and advocacy teams Customs and the BIR Vat Riders. Two more team sponsors will be named during the weekend before the drafting of riders for the different squads.

Also supporting the Golden Tour as major sponsors are Sunbolt (official sports drink), Summit (official water), Osaka Iridology, which will provide the uniforms for the cyclists and members of the Tour entourage, Island Souvenirs, PhilAm Life and Nestlé Power Bar, presentor of the Sprint King award.

Although the Golden Tour is basically a different endeavor from the Tour Pilipinas Inc. (TPI), organizers have tapped the same 80 cyclists, including the first on the alternate list as the 81st rider, who qualified from the qualifying races organized by the TPI in December.

Adding luster to the competition is the presence of six former Tour champions as coaches. They are back-to-back titlist Carlo Guieb, two-time champion Renato Dolosa, Gerardo Igos, Rolando Pagnanawon, Armando Catalan and Romeo Bonzo. The other coaches are former Tour regulars Hector Padilla, Cesar Lobramonte and Ceferino Vacunawa.

The Golden Tour carries a total cash prize of P2.717 million, with the top team bagging P700,000 and the overall individual champion pocketing P100,000.

PBA pillars are first Hall of Fame inductees

PILLARS of the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) responsible for laying out the solid foundation to which the league stands today are among the initial batch of inductees to be enshrined in the first ever PBA Hall of Fame.

Cage greats Robert Jaworski, Ramon Fernandez, Atoy Co, Philip Cezar, William Adornado and Francis Arnaiz lead the short but elite list of honorees composed of 12 fine gentlemen whom two nomination committees handpicked following a thorough selection and deliberation.

Legendary coach Virgilio Dalupan; founding league officials Leo Prieto, Emerson Coseteng and Rudy Salud, as well as the late team manager Danny Floro and popular broadcaster Joe Cantada join the six former star players who will be feted in a grand celebration night on May 28 at the Araneta Coliseum as part of the league's 30th anniversary festivities.

"It is a pleasure and honor for me to announce the members of the first ever PBA Hall of Fame, men who made significant contributions to the success of our league," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala.

All 12 easily stood out from an initial list of 69 individuals drawn and recommended by a panel of selection committee, before getting the nod of the honors committee composed of PBA chair Buddy Encarnado, vice chair Ely Capacio, league governors Bobby Kanapi and Joaqui Trillo, former commissioner Jun Bernardino, Bobong Velez, Dick Ildefonso, Bulletin sports editor Ding Marcelo, Malaya sports editor Jimmy Cantor and former Olympian Freddie Webb.

Jaworski, the former Senator and arguably, the most popular player the league ever produced, teamed up with Fernandez and Arnaiz to power the Toyota Tamaraws to nine PBA titles. The charismatic Big J later turned the once-moribund Ginebra team to a powerhouse squad and made it the most popular ball club in the league.

Veteran Thai wrests lead

From page A25

tournament after a complaint filed by Antonio Lascuña during the round was confirmed by the caddy of the Japanese, who was found to have improved his lie in many instances.

"Mr. Katoh was found to have violated certain rules deliberately and with the intention of taking advantage of the field," said Commodore Danny Pizarro, the chair of the RP Open committee.

Englishman Chris Gill turned in a 69 and rallied to join six others in sixth with 141 totals, including 2002 Open winner Rick Gibson of Canada, who fired a 70.

Rey Pagunsan shot a 72 and Gerald Rosales assembled his version of a 73 to be in a seven-man group at 142, level for the tournament and one shot up on a similar seven-man group for 20th spot that included Lascuña (71) and Angelo Que, who ballooned to a 75.

The $200,000 13th leg of the Asian Tour is being supported by Pagcor, PAL, Hanjin heavy industries, Aboitiz Group, Petron Blaze, PCSO and DOT backing the event with Lima City Hotel as the official hotel and Mt. Malarayat Hotel the official home.

Omega is the official timer and is a partner of the event like BMG Solar, Konica U-Bix, Human by Bench, C2 iced tea of Universal Robina Corp., Centennial Savings Bank, Patio Pacific Boracay, Mizuno and the Mt. Malarayat Inn.

CAGE BENEFACTOR: Senator Richard Gordon (middle) accepts his appointment as project director of the 2007 Fiba-Asia Men's Championships from Basketball Association of the Philippines EVP Christian Tan (right). With them are lawyer Boni Alentajan, Fritz Gaston, Boy Codinera and Turo Valenzona.

In more capable hands

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

ALTHOUGH the Philippines has yet to be officially awarded the hosting of the 2007 Fiba-Asia Men's Championship, the project couldn't have fallen into more capable hands than those of Sen. Dick Gordon, whose accomplishments as Tourism Secretary were exemplary.

Gordon, whose claim to sports fame is that of being the cheerleader of the Ateneo Blue Eagles—toting a live eagle on his shoulder at that, I remember so vividly—has accepted the BAP's offer for him to become project director of the Fiba-Asia Championship bid, a new undertaking he finds both exciting and challenging.

"I am truly pleased to participate in the organization, coordination and development of basketball in the Asian continent. Basketball, as conceived by the Fiba and the IOC, is one of our philosophies of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole, the qualities of body, will and mind," the BAP project director said.

As a new and integral member of the nation's basketball community, Gordon is calling on every Filipino "to be united .in supporting the modernized development of basketball in all sectors of society, down to the barangay level."

* * *

Player agent Danny Espiritu of late is being hounded by P.A.'s of the hottest television showbiz talk shows.

"No, it's not because they want me to guest in their show or anything like that. I'm in demand because I happen to be the manager of a popular PBA cager who is being tagged by actress Rufa Mae Quinto as the culprit who caused the rift between her and Fil-Am player Rudy Hatfield. Galit na galit daw si Rufa Mae sa player ko na pinagbibintangan niyang nagkalat na may relationship siya sa actor na si Dennis Trillo (any relation to Alaska's Joaqui?)," said Danny E.

Like Rufa Mae, Dennis is one of the hottest contract stars of GMA-7 today. My actress-sister tells me he won several best actor awards (for his first-ever movie 'Aishe Te Masu' (I hope I spelled the title right), a film about the second world war.

Danny said the P.A.'s are actually looking to interview his player and not him.

"Tatlo-tatlong shows ang tumatawag—Kontrobersyal, Star Talk and S-Files. Unfortunately, or probably fortunately for my player, he is abroad."

* * *

Speaking of Rudy Hatfield, his fan Boy Nitafan is strongly batting for his reinstatement in the pBA.

"*Naniniwala akong Pilipino si* Rudy, because Rufa Mae vouched for his bloodline. *Sabi ni* Rufa, Pilipinong-Pilipino *daw magmahal si* Rudy. *Naniniwala ako kay* Rufa. *Sana makabalik sa* PBA *si* Rudy, *at sana magkabalikan din silang dalawa. Sayang naman ang matagal nilang pinagsamahan*," Boy said.

* * *

A statement made by the PBA's Living Legend and former Sen. Sonny Jaworski during the drafting of players for the "Greatest Game" at the Edsa Shangri-La Plaza made even the men blush, according to a source who attended the event.

With only Benjie Paras and Manny Paner on the center slot of his lineup, the Big J proposed a trade with Legends coach Baby Dalupan, who wanted his team composed of his former players .

Jaworski, I was told, was trading two of his players for Jerry Codiñera, who played for Purefoods under Baby, but the latter refused, possibly irking the former.

While he was supposed to have two big men on his team—Benjie and Manny—Sonny was quoted as saying that he probably could count on only the younger cager.

"I doubt if Manny has held a ball recently. I'll bet the last ball he held was his own," Sonny was quoted to have said in Filipino.

* * *

Mon Fernandez was supposed to be in Jawo's team, but he begged off.

"*Galit pa kasi yun sa* PBA because of the Memorabilia issue. *Di ba pinahiram niya yung kanyang mga* memorabilia for exhibit *tapos, pinabayaan ng* PBA *na magkasira-sira*," our source said.

But didn't Mon play in the last Crispa-Toyota revival which was staged after the Memorabilia issue?

If you ask me, I think Mon might be a little reluctant and embarrassed to face the public after that recent scandal instigated by his ex-wife Marissa who had accused him of being a philanderer and worst of all, a wife beater.

* * *

Boxing fans will get a chance to see OPBF minimum weight champion and world No. 1 Rodel Mayol's title defense in Japan against former Japanese champion Takayuki Korogi, thanks to Viva Sports and Tanduay Rhum which will telecast the title fight on Sunday at l p.m. on the Main Event over RPN-9.

INQBOX
Question of the Week
More than 90 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. The Committee to Protect Journalists has identified the Philippines as "the most murderous country for journalists," followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia. What should be done to stop the killings?
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Mug! U
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inquirer news name/age/city/message.
(Maximum of 160 characters)
*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808.
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to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them.

YOUTH BOXING

Asenso foils power-hitting Ubas in semis

By Dennis U. Eroa
Inquirer Libre sports editor

PUERTO Princesa City—Rommel Asenso of Cotabato Province neutralized the power of Compostela Valley's Sandy Joven Ubas with masterful counterpunching to post a 19-6 victory and enter the pinweight finals (cadet) Wednesday night of the National Youth and Women's Amateur Boxing Championships at the Puerto Princesa Coliseum here.

Ranged against a foe, who won his first two bouts via stoppages, the classy Asenso frustrated Ubas with fine footwork and pinpoint punching to arrange a gold-medal showdown with Froiland Saludar of Kapalong.

Cotabato Province coach Dante Lerio, elder brother of Olympians Danny and Arlan Lerio, acknowledged the power of Ubas, but noted that the Compostela fighter had little defense.

Ubas, 17, came to the match confident of making the finals after sending to the hospital his quarterfinal foe Tuesday night. But after the second of three rounds, Ubas was clearly a confused pug as Asenso proved to be an elusive target.

Cotabato Province also had another finalist in the cadet category in Rene Bucag Jr. who was the only other entry in the lightweight division besides Panabo's Romeo Jakosalem.

Meanwhile, Panabo bolstered its title-retention bid with five entries, including Jakosalem, reaching the cadet finals. Competing in the cadet division are boxers over 15 but under 17 years old.

Participants in this week-long tournament hosted by the Puerto Princesa City Council headed by Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn and the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines under Manny Lopez, are also disputing honors in the juniors (over 17 but under 19 years old); female (over 17 but under 34 years old); school boys (over 13 but under 15 years old).

The other Panabo finalists are Jaime Quitoriano (flyweight), Charlie Suarez (light bantamweight), Ruel Adog (bantamweight) and Edward Abogada (featherweight).

Flyweight Elmer Hugo was the lone finalist for host Puerto Princesa as he staggered Jubert Daguplo of Mandaluyong City with a head blow 1:24 of the first round to win by referee stopped contest.

Also making the finals were lightflyweights Jill Lubaton (South Cotabato) and BJ Dolorosa (Cadiz City); lightbantamweight Robert Udtujan (Kapalong); bantamweight Silvestre Virtudazo (Compostela Valley); featherweight and Nilson Maya (South Cotabato).

Puerto Princesa's Gretchen Abaniel barged into the pinweight semifinals by beating teammate Marian Avesperos in the day's lone female bout.

Lopez arrived here Friday to supervise the conduct of the tournament aimed at discovering new and young talents.

Masbate booters rule South East Luzon Leg

MASBATE defeated Camarines Norte, 4-1, at the Rawis Stadium in Legaspi City recently to rule the 1st South East Luzon phase of the "PFF-Petron U-17 Championships."

The Masbate booters, in their maroon/gold uniforms, got its goals from Gringo Bravo in the 12th and 14th minutes, Renante Ursal (25th minute) and Nicanor Palago (80th) to sweep the single-round tournament hosted by the Legaspi-Albay Federated Football Association.

Lone goal-maker for Camarines Norte was Jeffrey Pantan in the 70th minute.

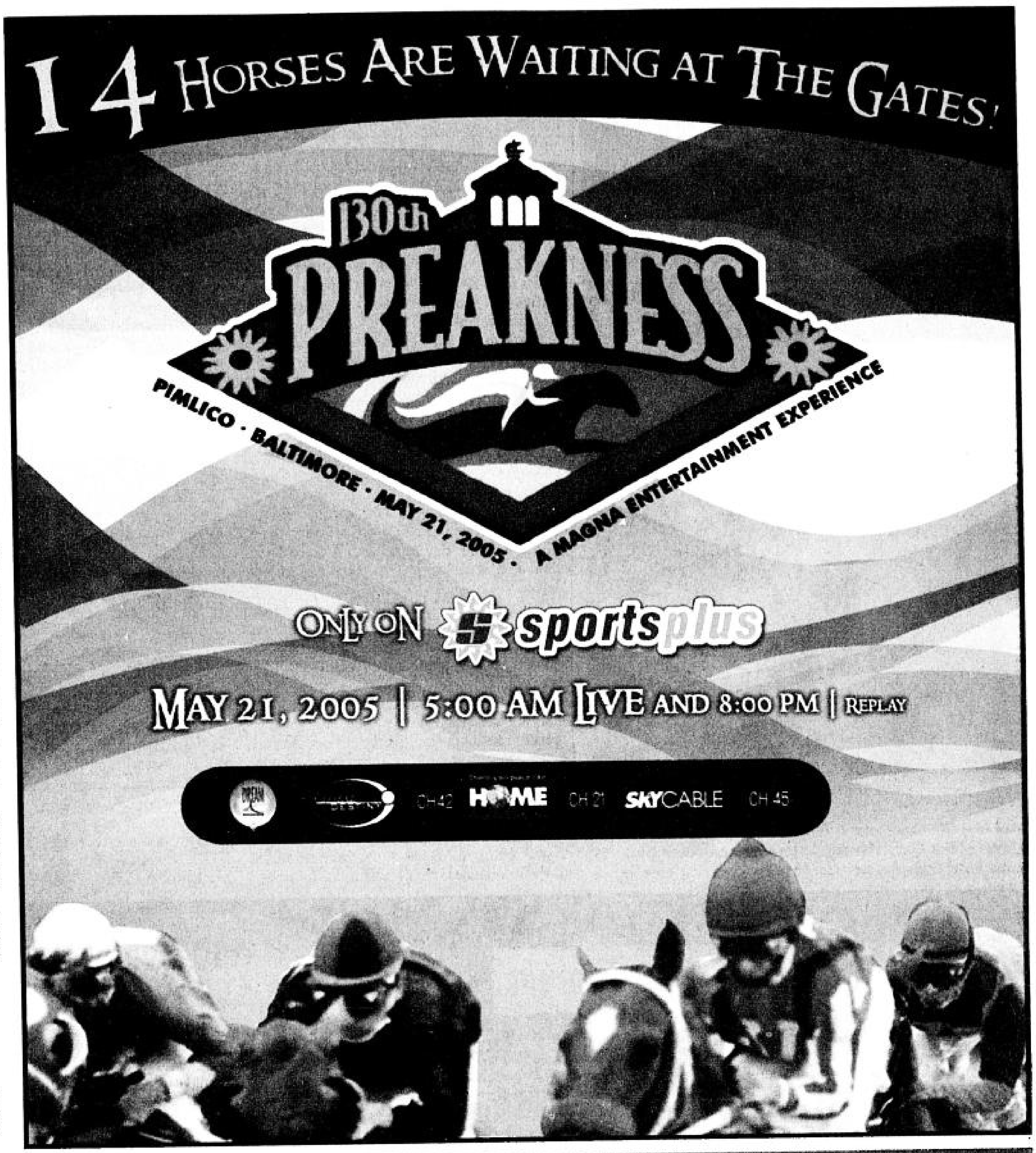
Masbate had earlier defeated Legaspi-Albay, 5-0, and Camarines Sur, 3-1.

Host Legaspi-Albay massacred Camarines Sur, 7-1, in the other game to place second in the overall standings.

The 1st PFF-Petron U-17 Championship in Southeast Luzon was hosted by the Legaspi-Albay Federated Football Association (Leg-Al) and backed by city councilor Abril Banana, Rawis Elementary School principal Prospero Ala and Taghi Kashef, president of Leg-Al FFA.

Tournament commissioner for the 3-day event was Alan Payson, general-secretary of the Laguna Football Association.

The on-going "PFF-Petron U-17 Championships" is supported by Philippine Football Federation sponsor-partners like the Red Ribbon Bakeshop, SuperFerry, Adidas, Pagcor Sports and Unicef.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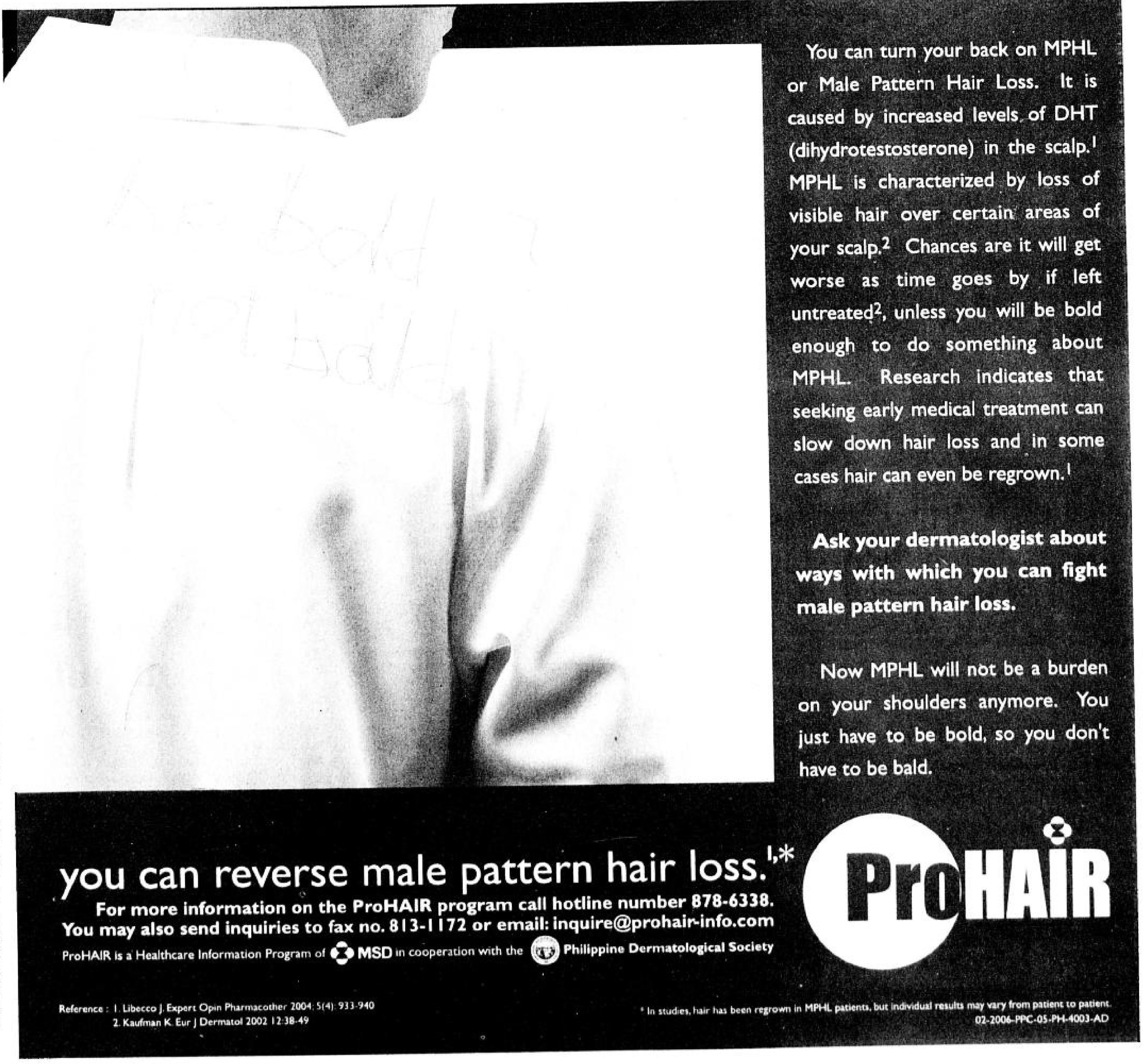
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ProHAIR

Reference : 1. Libecco J. Expert Opin Pharmacother 2004; 5(4): 933-940
2. Kaufman K. Eur J Dermatol 2002 12:38-49

* In studies, hair has been regrown in MPHL patients, but individual results may vary from patient to patient.
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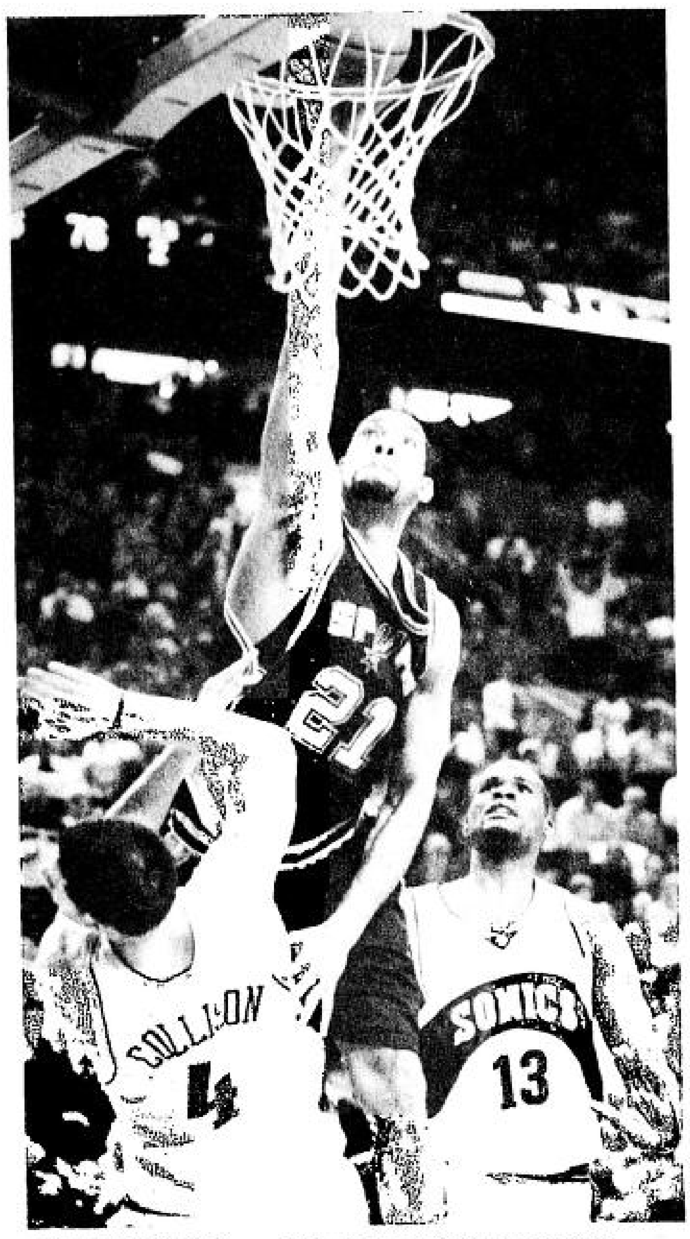
Pistons end 'Miller Time'

Detroit eliminates Indiana; San Antonio ousts Seattle



SAN ANTONIO forward Tim Duncan (21) scores over Seattle's Nick Collison (left) and Jerome James during in Game Six of their Western Conference series. REUTERS

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana—The Detroit Pistons took another step in the defense of their National Basketball Association championship Thursday, while Indiana Pacers icon Reggie Miller's NBA journey came to an end.

Miller scored 27 points in his final NBA game, but Detroit's Richard Hamilton scored 20 of his 28 in the second half as the Pistons posted an 88-79 victory over the Pacers to win their Eastern Conference semifinal series four games to two.

The victory was the Pistons' third straight in the series and sent them to the Eastern Conference finals for the third season in a row.

"Tonight, I had mixed emotions," said Pistons coach Larry Brown, who coached Miller and the Pacers from 1993-97. "It's a big game for us. You don't want to go game seven, but you don't want to see his career come to an end."

The Pistons, who have defeated Indiana in each of the last two seasons, open the Eastern Conference finals in Miami against the Heat on Monday.

Miller, who played all 18 of his seasons with Indiana, finished his career with a vintage effort, making 11-of-16 shots and 4-of-8 three-pointers.

He was one of just three Pacers to score more than six points.

In Seattle, Washington, Tim Duncan shrugged off an apparent ankle injury and delivered the final dagger Thursday as the San Antonio Spurs eliminated the Seattle SuperSonics from the playoffs.

Duncan scored 12 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter and hit the go-ahead layup with less than a second left to lift the Spurs to a 98-96 win and a 4-2 triumph in their Western Conference semifinal series.

The victory was the first by a road team in the series and sent San Antonio to the Western Conference finals for the fourth time in seven seasons.

"It's great to get out of this series," Duncan said. "This is a great team. They played a great series."

The Spurs will meet either Phoenix or Dallas.

To get there, San Antonio had to weather a difficult outing for Duncan and were rewarded for their patience with a brilliant finish by their superstar forward.

After Antonio Daniels split a pair of free throws with 14 seconds left to tie it at 96-96, the Spurs set up their final possession.

Manu Ginobili, who scored 39 points in a win in game five, took the inbounds pass and dribbled down the clock before making his move with about five seconds to go.

With Daniels on him, Ginobili penetrated to the left side of the foul line and whipped a pass to Duncan in the low post for short shot off the glass.

Duncan, who missed his first nine shots, did not make a basket until the late stages of the third quarter and suffered his injury with 8:08 left in the fourth.

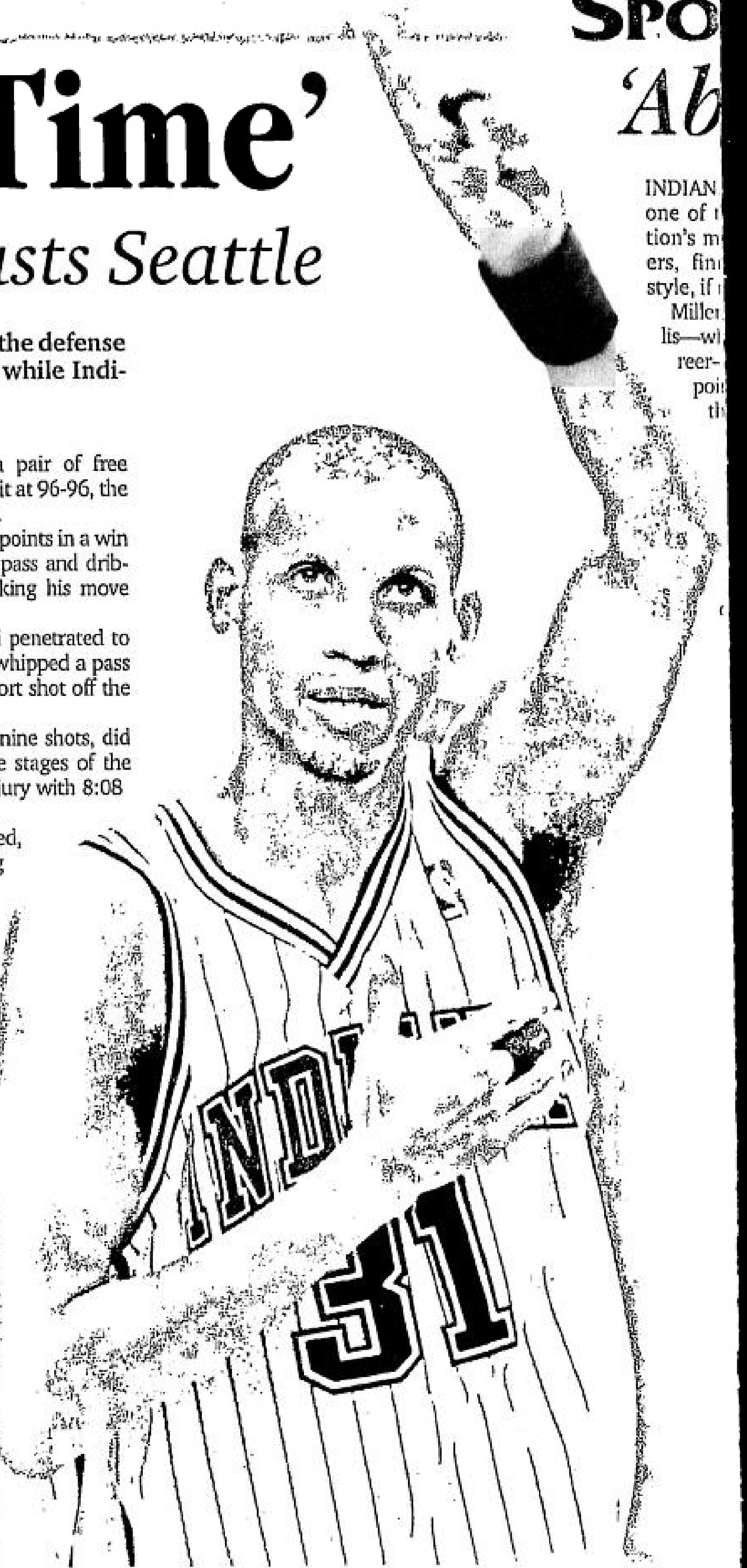
Shortly before the game ended, Miller was taken out, allowing the Indiana fans a chance for the emotional ovation they had kept in check all night. Brown and the Pistons joined in the applause.

"We gave it a valiant effort," Miller said. "I thought this was going to be our game."

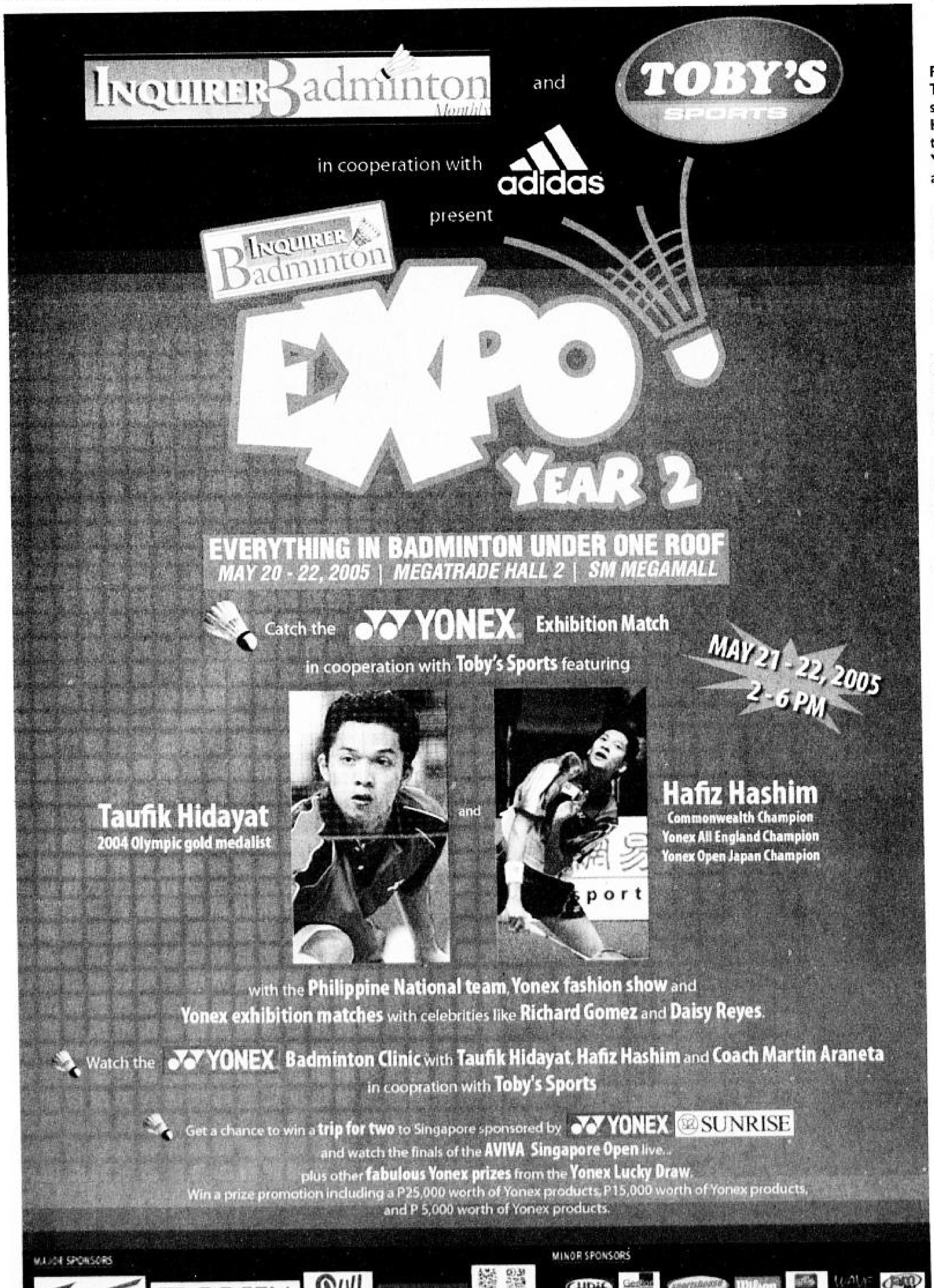
"For 18 years this has been my second home," he added. "I've grown up here."

Not only did the Pacers bid farewell to Miller, the team put behind them a season of upheaval.

The Pacers' infamous brawl with fans in Detroit on November 17 was followed by massive suspensions and a host of injuries. Miller was a key factor in the team's resiliency. *AFP*



REGGIE Miller says farewell to the fans who made Indiana his "second home." The veteran clutch shooter retires without an NBA ring, but with memories o some of the games greatest highlights: 25 points in the fourth quarter against Knicks in game five of the 1994 Eastern Conference finals, eight points in less than nine seconds in game one of the 1995 Eastern Conference finals at New York. Miller, who played his first NBA game in 1987, was a five-time NBA All-S and earned an Olympic gold medal in 1996. REL



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Sharapova gets new shot at top ranking

SHARAPOVA

LONDON—Foiled in her bid to become world No. 1 twice in the last month, Maria Sharapova will again gun for top spot next week and at the same time target a second grand slam crown.

The Wimbledon champion enters Roland Garros as a favorite for the women's title after an impressive start to the year in which she has reached the semifinals of the Australian Open and landed titles in Tokyo and Doha.

Her claycourt preparation has been steady if not spectacular with a quarterfinal showing in Berlin and a semifinal berth in Rome and the Russian world No. 2 feels her claycourt game is coming together at just the right time.

"I think I've had a pretty good preparation," the 18-year-old said last week. "You know, I'd rather play well—play better at a grand slam (than at the warm-up events) and just learn the things I need to work on and keep working on them the next week. Hopefully (I will) be fresh and ready for Roland Garros."

The willowy Russian said she had been improving her stamina with one eye on the gruelling claycourt grand slam.

"This is not an overnight process. I'm not going to cha overnight and all sudden be Superm and win everythi she smiled.

"But I think I' lot better than I last year in the c court season, that's an impro ment. And little by tle."

Last year she fe the quarterfinals that was before took the tennis w by storm with a s tacular victory at Wimbledon.

Sharapova can expect to be seeded ond by the French organizers, beh world No. 1 Lindsay Davenport, and fancy her chances of success—cert more so than compatriot and defen champion Anastasia Myskina.

Myskina has been struggling wi nagging shoulder injury which cast d over her participation in Paris.

Earlier this week she said she would tempt to defend her crown. *Reu*

Injuries knock Serena Lleyton out of 'French'

PARIS—Serena Williams pulled out of the French Open Friday because of an ankle injury.

Williams, the 2002 French Open champion, withdrew during a quarterfinal match at Amelia Island in April and then missed the German Open in early May.

She lost her first match after returning at the Italian Open on May 11. She moved poorly and called the 7-6 (2), 6-1 defeat to Francesca Schiavone the worst of her career.

Williams, ranked fourth in the world, is 15-4 overall this year and has reached at least the quarterfinals in her last four appearances at Roland Garros.

Russia's Elena Dementieva replaced the six-time Grand Slam winner as the fourth-seeded player in the French Open draw later Friday. Lindsay Davenport of the United States is the No. 1 seed.

The two-week clay-court tournam begins Monday.

Hewitt sets his sights on Wimble In Sydney, Australia, Lleyton He said he pulled out of the French Ope he could concentrate on being full for Wimbledon.

And he claimed Friday he's lu even to be contemplating a return Wimbledon after tumbling down s stairs at his Sydney home last week cracking two ribs.

"I was carrying stuff, which was p ably a blessing, 'cause I probably wo have broken my wrist if I was trying save myself," from falling, Hewitt sai an Australian TV interview.

The No. 2-ranked Hewitt said hadn't been able to practice since fall and never really had a chance to cover in time for the French Open.

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solutely, this is it’

POLIS, Indiana—Reggie Miller, he National Basketball Associa- ost exhilarating clutch perform- shed off his 18-year-career in ot in triumph, on Thursday.

39, gave fans in Indianapo- ere he played his entire NBA ca- -one last thrill as he scored 27 ts on 11-of-16 shooting, with four ree-pointers.

When Pacers coach Rick Carlisle pulled Miller from the game, Pistons coach Larry Brown called a time-out with just 16 seconds left, during which he and his team joined the ovation at Conseco Fieldhouse before finishing ff an 88-79 win.

“We saw one of the true, vintage Reggie Miller performance that you can see in the playoffs,” Carlisle said. “He gave us a chance to win against the defending world champions who were simply better.”

Brown was also emotional.

“He played like he was 22 years old,” Brown said. “I’m glad everybody got to see it, and we have to cherish that.”

“It was an unbelievable ride,” said Miller. “It’s been the best 18 years, but it’s time to move on.”

Carlisle quashed any suggestion that Miller might reconsider, despite the imploring signs and chants from fans begging for “One more year”.

Miller himself said his career was over: “Absolutely, positively, this is it,” he said. *AFP*

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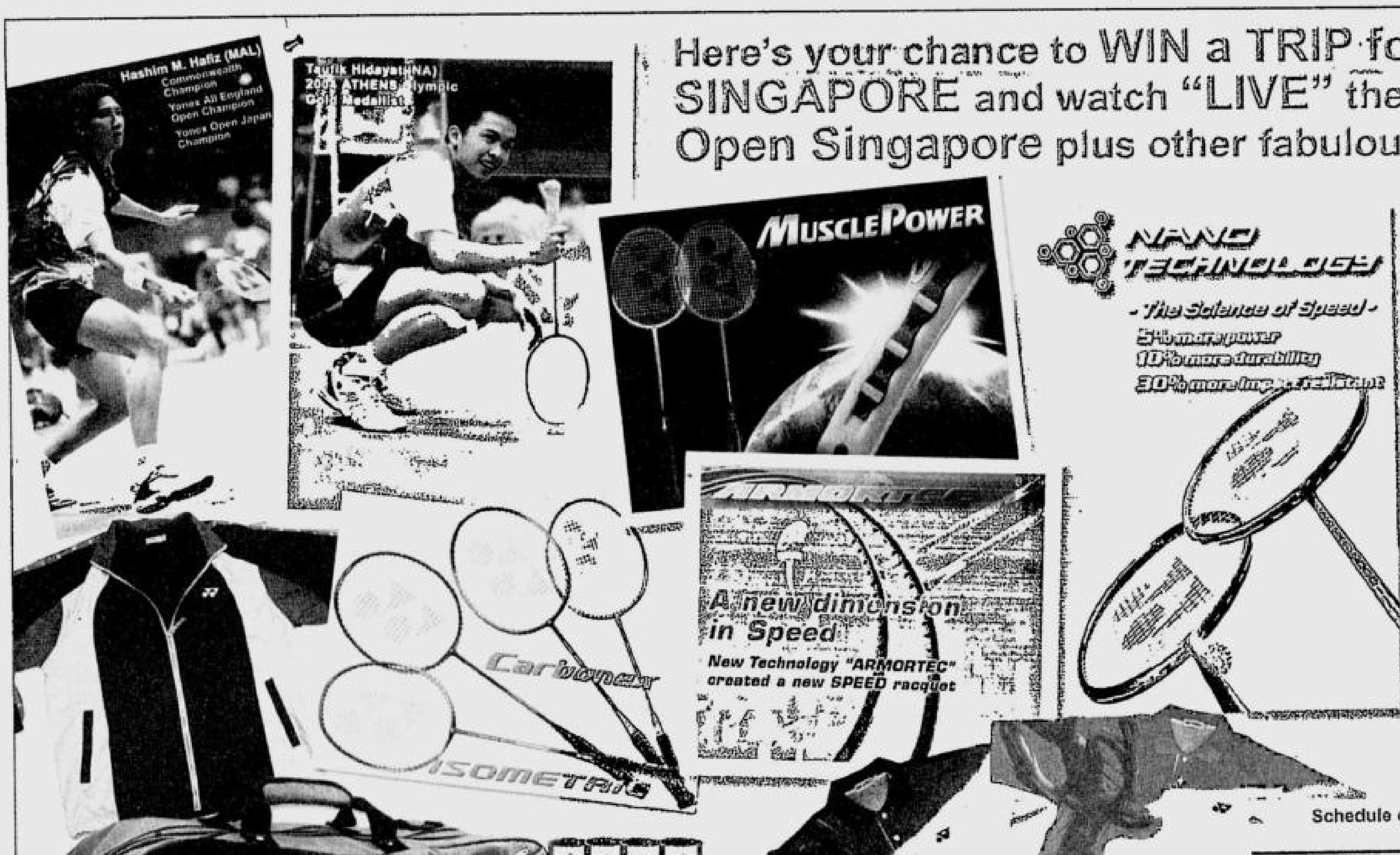

For every P 1,000 single receipt purchase of YONEX products during the Inquirer Badminton Expo, 5/F SM Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall the customer is entitled to one (1) lucky draw coupon for the Yonex Lucky Draw Win a Prize Promotion.

Customers must drop their lucky draw coupon/s at the designated Yonex drop boxes in the participating booths.

Promotion period is from May 20 until May 22, 2005.

Participating booths in the expo are Toby’s Sports, Racquets & More, Chris Sports and Sporthouse.

Schedule of Yonex Lucky Draw Win A Prize Promotion
Date : 22nd May 05

Consolation Prize	Grand Draw
Venue :: Tobys Sports Booth, Chris Sports Booth, Sportshouse Booth, Racquets & More Booth 5/F SM Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall	Venue :: Activity Center 5/F SM Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall
Time :: 5:30pm	Time :: 6:00pm
PRIZE :: One (1) Winner of P5,000 worth of Yonex Products for each Booth.	1st Prize ::One (1) winner for a Trip for two (2) to SINGAPORE. 2nd Prize ::One (1) winner of P25,000.00 worth of Yonex Products. 3rd Prize ::One (1) Winner of P15,000.00 worth of Yonex Products.

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airfare to Singapore (WK of 27 June - 04 July 2005)
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:: Overnight stay for 2 on twin sharing basis in Elizabeth hotel in Singapore.
:: 2 passes to the Aviva Open in Singapore

2ND PRIZE:
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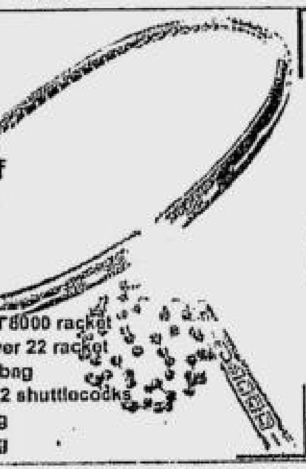
:: 1 Yonex BG 66 string



3RD PRIZE:
One winner of P15,000 worth of Yonex Products
:: 1 Armortec 800 racket
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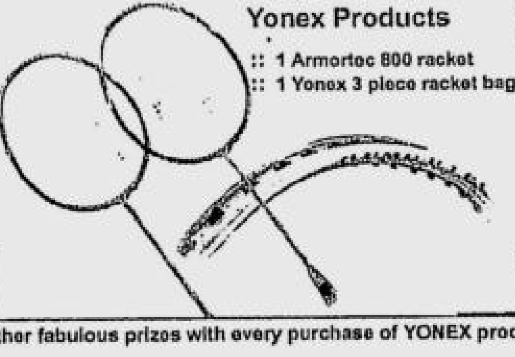

CONSOLATION PRIZE:
Four winners of P5,000 worth of Yonex products
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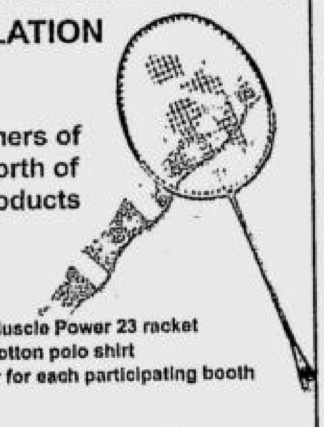
:: 1 Yonex cotton polo shirt
* One winner for each participating booth



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KAOSHIUNG MEET

Gabito heads 8-man RP track contingent

KAOSHIUNG, Taiwan—Olympian and Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Lerma Bulauitan-Gabito leads the eight-man Philippine track and field team which opens its bid in the 2005 Chinese Taipei International Athletic Meet beginning today at the Kaoshiung County stadium here.

Gabito, the reigning women's SEA Games long jump queen, is joined in the two-day meet by fellow long jumper Marestella Torres, RP men's long jump record holder Henry Dagmil, Sean Guevara, and sprinters Ralph Waldy Soguilon, Arnold Villarube, Alex Gabito and Honet Joy Ortaliz.

The RP tracksters, whose stint in this bustling seaport county is made possible by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) and San Miguel Corp. through the initiatives of the First Gentleman Foundation of lawyer Jose Miguel Arroyo and supported by the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), are using the event as part of their preparations and training for the 23rd Philippine SEA Games later this year.

Notwithstanding the hot weather, national coach Joseph Sy said the Filipinos are in tip-top shape and are out to give the opposition from 10 other countries a very good fight.

"It's quite hot, but I'm optimistic that my wards will put up a good fight," said Sy in Filipino.

The Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association (Patafa) headed by Go Teng Kok is targeting to win 10 to 15 gold medals in its ambitious bid to win the overall track and field championship of this year's SEA Games set Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

In the 2003 edition of the biennial meet held in Vietnam, athletics produced a total of eight gold medals, the most number of golds won among local sports associations.

Aside from the Philippines and the host country, also seeing action in the tournament are SEA Games powerhouse Thailand, Japan, Korea, Uzbekistan, Macau, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Hong Kong and the USA.

The 30-year-old Bulauitan, holder of the RP women's long jump record together with Elma Muros-Posadas (6.56 meters), will compete in her pet event, where she's expected to go up against her Asian rivals from Uzbekistan and Korea.

BULAUITAN: Medal hopeful

JVC junior badminton semis start

KIDS show their stuff beginning today as action in the JVC Badminton Open Juniors Championships resumes with the staging of the semifinal round in the 10-under division at SM Southmall today.

Julius Lagdamen of San Juan Badminton Center clashes with Jan Banquiles of Centro Atletico in the first match at noon, hoping to clinch the first championship berth in the tournament sponsored by JVC to give the kids equal exposure with those in the other age-group divisions.

Lagdamen blanked Judd Reyes of Centro Atletico, 15-0, 15-0, in the quarters to set up a semis duel with Banquiles, who trounced Gio Angsico, 15-10, 15-9, in the boys' singles.

The other semis match pits Al Craven Chan of RSL, who thwarted Jayvie Cagomoc, 15-12, 15-8, against Antonio Villarin of Anvil BC, who beat Kennedy Espina, 15-8, 15-4.

Kawasaki/Sports Hub's Malvinne Alcala, on the other hand, eyes the first championship berth in the girls side of the event backed by Gosen, Cebu Pacific, Water Front Hotels and Lactacyd. Alcala tangles with Crismayne Co of Malolos, who scored a walkover win over Ma. Benite Zuniga.

Eunice Servando collides with Alexandra Villarin in the other semis encounter with Servando, playing out of Shuttler's Haven, holding off Michelle Millan of CA, 11-4, 11-2, in the quarters and the latter winning by forfeit over Janelle de Vera.

Meanwhile, the semis round in the girls and boys doubles in the 10-under group will be played tomorrow with Michelle Alyssa Millan-Ma. Benita Zuñiga facing Sarah Loise Serquera-Joella De Vera.

DAVAO
MONTAÑA
28

GERWIN Gaco (left) of Harbour Centre beats Montaña's Alex Compton to the ball. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Welcoat, Magnolia target key victories

WELCOAT Paints tries to seal a playoff for the second semifinal slot when it goes up against winless Nenaco-San Beda at the end of the elimination round in the PBL Unity Cup today at the JCSGO Gym in Cubao.

GAMES TODAY (JCSGO Gym, Cubao)
2 p.m.—Nenaco vs Welcoat
4 p.m.—Magnolia vs Toyota Otis-Letran

Fresh from an important victory against the Montaña Jewels, the Paintmasters are hands-down choices to prevail at 2 p.m. to forge a knockout duel with Harbour Centre and break their tie for the No. 2 slot.

Montaña claimed the first automatic semifinal slot after drubbing Harbour Centre, 73-63, last Thursday.

Magnolia Ice Cream, the surprisingly struggling defending champion, will also figure in a decisive match today when it battles Toyota Otis-Letran at 4 p.m.

The Ice Cream Wizards must win to also seal a playoff game against the Knights for the twice-to-beat advantage in the quarterfinals.

Bolstered by Fil-Am Kelly Williams, the Wizards won their last two assignments as their new recruit averaged 14 points, 7.5 rebounds and five assists.

"Kelly is a hardworking player, very smart and he knows his goals," said Magnolia coach Koy Banal. "He's only been with us for a few days so we can't really teach him all the plays yet. But he's a winner."

Arwind Santos, the team's lead scorer at 12.6 points, Denok Miranda and Neil Rañeses have also shown renewed confidence in pulling Magnolia out of its slump.

The Knights, though, will try to protect their solo fourth position with sweet-shooting Mark Macapagal, 6-foot-7 behemoth Mark Andaya and Emerson Oreta, who buried the game-winning shot in their first-round win over Magnolia, 63-62.

Welcoat, meanwhile, is expected to repeat its emphatic 92-63 triumph over the eliminated Nenaco-San Beda.

Anthony Washington, who finished with 27 points and 10 rebounds against Montaña, will try to lead the Paintmasters to an 8-3 tie with Harbour Centre. *Jasmine W. Payo*

2007 hosting bid affected by cage issue

THE INTERNATIONAL basketball federation (Fiba) has already expressed concern over the controversy presently rocking Philippine basketball. And that's bad news for the country's bid to host the 2007 Asian championship.

Fiba president Carl Ching Menky has reportedly been briefed of the situation in the BAP which is likely to be suspended by the POC when the general assembly votes on it on May 25.

Sources said the negative feedback the Fiba chief is receiving may backfire on the country's chances to stage the Fiba-Asia tournament which determines the two regional qualifiers to the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

The country has been building up a squad strong enough to propel the Philippines once more to the Olympic stage which the Filipinos last reached in the 1972 Munich Games.

This developed as a member of the POC executive council bared that they are expecting at least 36 national sports associations to vote for the suspension of the BAP based on the recommendation of POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

"It is clear to them (NSAs) that this recommendation was purely based on very legitimate arguments and the penalty sought fits the violation,"cthe POC official said

The 39 voting members of the GA convenes on Wednesday with only 26 votes needed to uphold the POC proposal to suspend the BAPfor reneging on its earlier agreement with the POC and other basketball stakeholders regarding basketball programs leading to 2008.

Mengky and Cojuangco had an exchange of ideas two months ago also during a POC general assembly. From then on, Menky has been updated of the development in basketball, according to the POC.

Mengky had indicated to Go Teng Kok that the country stands a good chance of swinging the deal, but he said the prospects are no longer as bright as now. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

ROUT: China's Zhang Jianwang pitches against Nino Tator of the Philippines in the second inning during the 23rd Asian Baseball Championship in Miyazaki, southern Japan. China won, 22-0. REUTERS

So, De Ramos near youth chess sweep

WORLD Youth campaigners Fide Master Wesley So and Julius De Ramos bested separate opponents in the sixth and penultimate round yesterday to virtually claim victory in their respective divisions at the Trade Hall of Starmall Shopping Complex in Mandaluyong City.

So, the country's youngest ever chess master at 11, downed Loren Brigham Laceste in the boys' 12-under while De Ramos, the youngest National Open qualifier this year at 18, thrashed Johnny Carzano in the boys' 18-under.

Jan Emmanuel Garcia also maintained his unbeaten mark in the boys' 10-under after beating Eugene Samonte.

Unheralded Adrian Perez grabbed the lead in the boys' 14-under after stopping the winning run of Joel Pimentel. He improved to 5.5 points while Pimentel got stuck at 5.0.

Meanwhile, Paulo James Florendo and Jesus Alfonso Datu shared the lead in the boys' 16-under with 5.5 points.

In the distaff side, Chardin Cheradee Camacho continued to overwhelm her rivals in the 12-under bracket. She rolled to her sixth straight win at the expense of Jessa Balbona.

Sherily Cua was also untouchable in the under-18 as she crushed Gina Edaniol for her sixth point.

There was a three-way traffic in the 10-under after Brena Mae Membrere toppled erstwhile unbeaten Arvie Lozano and Lawrean Fulcher won over Merlene Membrere. Brena Mae, Lozano and Fulcher tote similar 5.0 points with one to play.

Rulp Ylem Jose seized control in the under-16 after whipping Marie Angeli Dimakiling for her fifth point.

Tambunting stops Yee, gains golf final

JUSTIN Tambunting holed a 25-footer for birdie on the extra hole to end the winning run of Miko Yee and set up a finals duel with Miko Alejandro in the The Montecillo Cup: The Philippine Junior Golf Championships at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Coming off another sudden-death victory over the much younger Wolen Superal, Tambunting shot it out with eliminations topnotcher Yee in an exciting day-long duel and made the most important putt on their return to the 18th hole.

Alejandro got his place in the final when he booted out Aran Olea, 3&2, in the other semifinal.

Tambunting and Alejandro will dispute the crown in a 36-hole showdown between the young guns of the Manila Southwoods team which won the PAL Interclub in Bacolod recently.

Princess Superal and Bambee dela Paz will dispute the girls plum of the event, the second major leg of the Samsung Jungolf Tour also given major backing by Philippine Airlines with Titleist/Dynamic Sports Corp., Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. and Unilever as minor sponsors.

Orchard bet Superal, the eldest among three siblings in the jungolf ranks, kept his consistency to show the door to Paulina Sotto, 4 & 3, while Dela Paz shrugged off the challenge of a resurgent Cyna Rodriguez to win on the 19th hole.

The Superal-dela Paz title duel will be for 18 holes.

Tambunting's two successive playoff wins actually made him work for 39 holes in a day to earn his place in the finals while handing Yee a sorry loss after showing dominating form in the eliminations and his first two match play foes.

Dela Paz is riding on a big streak that includes a victory against the long-hitting Regine de Guzman in the quarterfinals.

Yee bundled out No. 16 Gino Bunyi, 4&3 then returned to oust Jikjik Abdon via a 2&1 decision Thursday. Tambunting went through three extra holes to oust Wolen Superal.

SPORTSWATCH

Las Piñas derby under way today

FAST–PACED fights are lined up tonight at the fully air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum as the special 3-cock derby gets under way at 7. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. To be hosted by veteran cocker Eddie Alejandro of Parañaque, the derby stakes a cash prize of P300,000 for an entry fee of P5,500. Entries must be submitted until 2 p.m. and participants may call 873-1040, 874-3910 and 0926 -7450375 for details (look for Julius). Coliseum manager Alex Tobias said hackfights will also be staged today. Meanwhile, the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) will hold its "Grand Championship 5–Cock One Day Derby" on Monday to determine the Cocker of the Year winner.

Summer Heat 4-cocker stakes P1.2M

ROLIGON Mega Cockpit's "Summer Heat 4–Cock Derby," an offshoot of the 277- entry Game Ka Na Ba Derby recently, is set May 28, 30 and June 1 with a guaranteed prize of P1.2 million and a Toyota Hi- Lux Diesel at stake. Derby host Rolly Ligon came up with this cockfest due to numerous requests from small-time cockers and breeders who want maximum exposure for their fowls with minimal risks involved. "That's why we decided to lower the entry to only P5,500, so that more breeders can join," Ligon explained. Reservation of cockhouses is now open. For inquiries, contact 833-2275,833-1638 and 852 -9812. Meanwhile, the special 3-cock event of Boy Valenzuela sizzles today with more than 50 fights lined up. A cash prize of P200,000 is up for grabs for an entry fee of P4,400.

Summer Heat 5-cock derby May 28

THE SUMMER Heat 5-Cock Derby will be held May 28, 30 and June 1 at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. Sponsored by Thunderbird Stag Develor and Thunderbird Baby Stag Booster, the derby offers a purse of P1,200,000 for an entry fee of P5,500 and a minimum bet of P4,400. In addition, the champion who will post the fastest win on the last fight will drive home a Toyota Hi-lux 4x4 pick-up. Reservation of cockhouses and slots is now going on. Call 8332275, 8331638 or 8529812 for details.

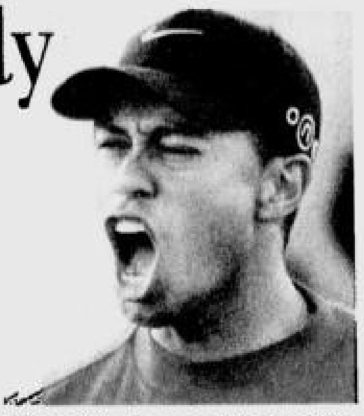
Anton rules Guam Autocross

CARLOS Anton of MP Turbo dominated the final round of the Guam Road Races Autocross series held at Guam International raceway in Yigo recently. Using a sponsored Toyota Section TC by Guam's largest Toyota dealer Atkins Kroll, Anton topped the stock class with a time of 1:32.393, beating the then undefeated Anthony Crisostomo of Guam. Crisostomo, driving a Mazda Miata, clocked 1:32.550. In the Street Modified Class where most competitors were Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) members, Anton used a Subaru STI and clocked 1:26.599 almost two seconds clear of the Guam series champion Adrian Banu.

Chavez, Aralar triumph

PUERTO Princesa City—Celeste Chavez and Jethro Aralar were adjudged as the overall winners in the Westkini Open, one of the featured events in the recent sixth "Karagatan Festival" at the Tagkawayan City Beach. Chavez bested 23 other female participants, while Aralar won over 13 other male entries in the unique competition organized by Jay Macasaet as part of the three-day festival. A 17-year old tourism student at the Palawan State University, Chavez earned the nod of the judges during the three-hour long competition. Celeste Celis, 21, finished first runner-up, while April Laraya wound up second runner-up.

Wanna win more in sport? Wear red, says study


TIGER Woods, one of the world's most successful golfers, always wears red in the final round.

WEARING red increases the chance of victory in sports, say British researchers who clearly do not follow the Cincinnati Reds.

"Across a range of sports, we find that wearing red is consistently associated with a higher probability of winning," Dr. Russell Hill and Dr. Robert Barton, researchers in evolutionary anthropology at the University of Durham, wrote in a paper that appears Thursday in the journal Nature.

The research began a year ago with a hunch based on observations in the animal kingdom, where red coloration is often associated with male dominance, Barton said in an interview. Zebra finches that have been fitted with red leg bands, for example, tend to become dominant, while those given blue bands are more submissive. In humans, anger reddens the face, a coloring that may send subtle signals of fierceness.

The two researchers studied results of the 2004 Summer Olympics to eliminate the possibility of a home team advantage, and found that contestants in tae kwon do, boxing and wrestling were issued red or blue protective gear at random. "It's almost as if somebody had designed an experiment for us," Barton said.

Hill said the evidence of a beneficial effect had emerged, with combatants wearing red winning 6 out of 10 bouts in especially close matches. "Even we were surprised at how consistently the results have been coming out across the range of sports we have looked at," he said.

They have taken a preliminary look at soccer as well, and found that in the Euro 2004 international soccer tournament, the five teams that wore predominantly red shirts did better.

This does not mean that a bad team can reverse its fortunes by wearing red, Barton said. The study applies only to closely matched competitors. "If you're hopeless," he said, "then wearing red isn't going to make you start winning."

In London, a representative of William Hill, a leading betting company, called the study "absolute rubbish." *New York Times News Service*

Yonex spices up Badminton Expo with Olympic medalist

By Jasmine W. Payo

INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and Toby's Sports president Jojo Claudio do the ceremonial serve of the INQUIRER Badminton Expo at the SM Megamall.
ROMY HOMILLADA

Badminton's popularity in the country remains on the up trend after a couple of years. And for Yonex, the idea to bring an Olympic medalist quickly sparked.

"For the first time, we're bringing an Olympian because we saw there are so many badminton enthusiasts here," said Yonex regional marketing manager Arun Arora yesterday in the INQUIRER Badminton Expo at the Megatrade Hall 2 in SM Megamall.

Taufik Hidayat, the singles gold medalist in the 2004 Athens Olympics, and world's ninth-seed Hashim Hafiz will be flashing their winning forms at 3 p.m. today and tomorrow in the Yonex Sports Exhibition Match.

"They're excited to come here," said Arora. "But they're also looking forward to teach the children."

Hidayat, a former world number one, Malaysian sensation Hafiz, Philippine badminton team coach Martin Araneta and national team members will also conduct a skills-improvement clinic during the day.

"They'll be giving important tips," said Arora, noting that an autograph session will be held at 6 p.m. "It's open to everyone. We'll even have rackets available for those who weren't able to bring any."

Celebrities including Richard Gomez, beauty queen Daisy Reyes, actress Rio Locsin and model Gem Padilla will also compete in the side events.

Other highlights will be the Yonex Fashion Show and the raffle, where expo visitors will have a chance to win a trip for two to Singapore to watch the finals of the Aviva Open.

The three-day event, which is open to the public, is also offering big discounts on badminton shoes, bags, rackets and other accessories from top distributors including Toby's, adidas, Yonex, Prince, Mizuno, Victor, Dunlop, Kason, Carlton, Gosen and Wilson.

Meanwhile, eight teams advanced to the quarterfinals in the Inquirer Badminton Bulilit Tournament.

Sportshouse, Battledore, Mizuno, Teebox/San Jura, The Zone, Hearty Plus Enterprise, World Kalakal and Alabang Racquet Club topped the 24 teams that competed in the race-to-21 knockout contest yesterday. Finals will be held on May 22 at 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Laylo upsets Russian GM

MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota—Grandmaster Joey Antonio rolled to his third straight victory even as reigning Philippine national open champion Darwin Laylo downed Russian Super Grandmaster Alexander Motylev in a big upset Thursday in the HB Global Chess challenge Thursday at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Laylo's victory over Motylev, the tournament's No. 2 seed, caught the attention of Maurice Ashley, the organizer of what is dubbed as the world's richest chess tournament ever with a $50,000 top prize in the open division.

"I'm impressed at how he (Laylo) held the advantage position against Motylev," said Ashley, the only African-American Grandmaster. "He's got strong nerves and determination. [He's] a good defensive player."

Laylo later drew with Indian Pentala Harikrishna,the reigning world junior champion, in 38 moves of an English Opening to raise his total of 2.5 points following an earlier victory over Dennis Strenzwik.

Antonio hacked out a 45-move victory against American Michael Langer using his pet Sicilian Alapin to remain on top with perfect 3 points with GM Alexander Shabalov, GM Joel Benjamin, GM Yuri Shulman and GM Alexander Beliavsky.

Laylo, an enlisted army man under Lt. Gen. Generoso Senga, was in a tie with compatriot GM Nelson Mariano II and Illinois-based International Master Angelo Young.

Mariano settled for a truce with American GM Igor Novikov after a marathon 103 moves of a King's Indian Defense while Young demolished American Loal Davis in just 24 moves of a Center Counter Game.

IM Jayson Gonzales suffered his first loss at the hands of Kazakhstan super GM Darmen Sadvakasov after 58 moves of an Irregular Game.

With the loss, Gonzales was stuck at 2points, the same output of ex-Asian 3.2a zonal champion and GM-candidate Ronald Dableo and Cebuano IM Enrico Sevillano.

"It's okay if I only drew Harikrishna," said Laylo, whose stint here is supported by NCFP president Go Teng Kok, NCFP sec-gen lawyer Samuel Estimo, Gerry Albano, Filway Marketing, Marikina mayor Marides Fernando and Councilor Boy Santos. "At least, I was able to reserve a little strength for the next round."

Also getting a piece of the spotlight was Minnesota-based John Ferdinand Versoza, who rolled to his third straight victory to lead the unrated section with five others.

Versoza, a nurse at the Mayo's hospital here and a former top player of Lingayen, Pangasinan, needed 40 moves to beat Eugne Sherayzen.

Other Filipinos entered in this event are US Master Rico "Kokoy" Salimbagat, and prodigies Marc Christian Nazario and Leo Daylo Jr, chess writer Almario Marlon Bernardino Jr., NM Winston Joseph Silva and US-based Filipino players, Ernesto Encarnacion and Danilo Concepción of New York, Dexter Pacheco of Chicago, Oscar Fabuena of Colorado, and Sergio Gimutao, Sonny Lunas and Joel Quiba of San Diego. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Jabbar to spread the art of 'trash'

SHANGHAI, China—NBA great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is on a mission to teach trash talking in Shanghai.

The all-time leading NBA scorer is scheduled to arrive in Shanghai on Saturday to lead a camp exploring cultural differences between American and Asian basketball players—including the use of strong language to intimidate opponents.

The inclusion of Chinese players in the NBA, such as the Houston Rockets' Yao Ming and Wang Zhizhi of the Miami Heat, has emphasized differences between the more individualistic, aggressive American style of play and the less physical, more team-oriented Asian game.

Course designers, including NBA players, coaches and psychologists, hope to use the experiences of players such as Yao to prepare future Asian NBA stars for real-life situations, including talking trash and dealing with the media.

Other topics will cover physicality on the court, footwork, rebounding, nutrition and fitness, and mental preparation.

Also on the syllabus—the former Los Angeles Lakers star's famed "sky hook." *AP*

Shell scooter slated

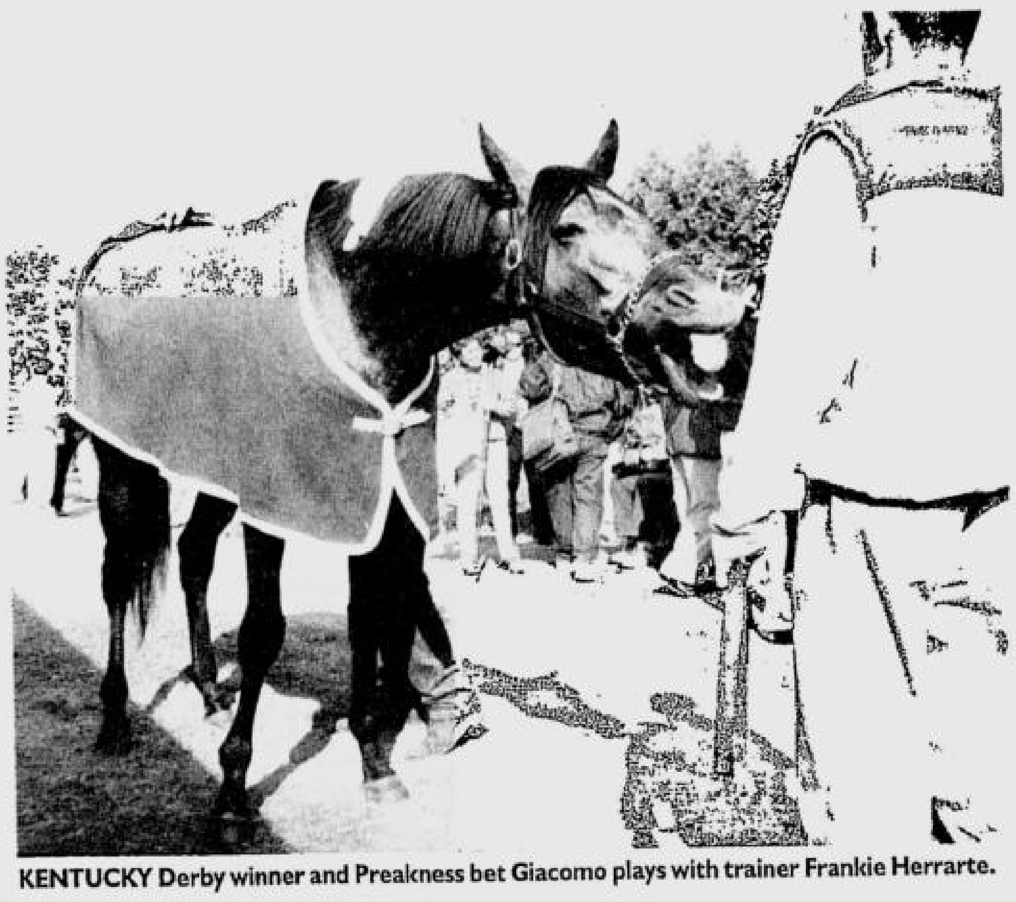
EXPECT another tight and exciting action when the third leg of the 2005 Shell Advance Super Underbone Scooter Series resumes on Sunday, May 22 at the Carmona Racing Circuit in Carmona, Cavite.

Multi-titled rider Jolet Jao and Maico Buncio renew their rivalry in the centerpiece 110-125cc underbone open category in this annual series organized by the EL Racing Tech and Shell.

Jao, one of the country's winningest riders, drew first blood by ruling the kickoff leg held last March 6 over Jaime Barcial, Benjamin Dolores and Geoffrey Aguisanda.

But Buncio, who is best remembered for leading the Philippines to a fourth-place finish in the Yamaha-ASEAN Cup in Shah Alam, Malaysia last year, showed up Jao in the second leg.

Focus of attention will also be on Jeffrey Chan of Hirano Racing-Norkis Yamaha, who is seeking his third straight win in the 125cc stock underbone class.


KENTUCKY Derby winner and Preakness bet Giacomo plays with trainer Frankie Herrarte.

De Asis rules Runnex race

JOJIT de Asis and Liza Yambao ruled the 22nd Runnex-PowerBar Anniversary Run Sunday held inside the UP-Diliman campus.

De Asis, 25, pulled away from his closest pursuers Wilson Maningkil and Genevevo Azarcon in the last four kilometers of the 16K run to emerge champion anew, clocking 57:40 for the distance.

Maningkil, 21, failed to keep pace with De Asis and settled for second place in 57:59 while Azarcom finished third in 58:17.

The top 3 finishers of the event, backed also by Pharmaton, Mizuno RMG Shoes, Nescafe, David's Salon, Pfizer, Polar Heart Rate Monitor, Globe Telecom, and Viva Mineral received P3,000, P2,000 and P1,000, respectively.

Yambao, 23, topped the women's division, posting an easy solo victory in 1:09.07 while veteran Liza Delfin, 37, took second place in 1:12.05. Mila Paje was third with 1:16.47.

Preakness: Giacomo eyes respect

BALTIMORE—Kentucky Derby winner Giacomo can silence his many skeptics Saturday when he faces 13 other colts in the Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course.

Giacomo won the Run for the Roses two weeks ago after a blistering pace created the slowest finish over a fast track since 1974.

With Mike Smith in the saddle, many say Giacomo did not win as much as he survived. Rarely has a colt received such little respect following a Derby triumph.

Trainer D. Wayne Lukas, saddling Going Wild for the Preakness, boldly guaranteed there will not be a Triple Crown winner this year.

Pimlico officials made Giacomo only the fourth choice in the early betting line at 6-1.

"There's no question Afleet Alex is the horse to beat," offered Malibu Mooshine trainer King Leatherbury.

The lack of respect for the gray colt Giacomo suits trainer John Shirreffs just fine.

"It's always a comfort feeling when there's not a lot of pressure," said Shirreffs, saddling his first Preakness horse.

"To be 1-5 would be awfully tough." Shirreffs said the son of Holy Bull is working out well.

"I like that he came out of the Kentucky Derby in very good shape," he said.

"His coat's still good. He looks good on the track. He's not nervous. It's the way he's been in the past." Reuters

Ayala Greenfield playable this July

THE Ayala Greenfield course can now offer golfers a full 18 holes to play in.

AYALA Greenfield's all-weather, par-72 championship course in Calamba, Laguna will become the latest golf gem in Southern Tagalog this July.

Designed by world renowned golf course architech Robert Trent Jones Jr., the course that offers Mt. Makiling as backdrop is nearing completion. The front nine opened for play at the start of the year.

The golf clubhouse will also be ready in October this year.

Heritage Golf International landed the job of crafting the distinctive Ayala Greenfield golf course.

Director for construction Greg Graham, who has been involved with the project since January last year, said Jones was more than satisfied with Heritage Golf's dedicated translation of his vision for the Ayala Greenfield golf course during his last visit.

"He's very pleased. It's very seldom, when you build a golf course, that you take a set of plans and see everything end up exactly as envisioned. This golf course evolved from the design. We took that and the changes he made in the process, and what we ended up with is a much better golf course. Robert Trent Jones Jr. is very pleased with that." he said.

Dirk Bonawitz, general manager of Heritage Golf Philippines, said "everything is progressing nicely. The golf course is coming together very well."

Graham promised a lot of fun for players.

"What they're going to find is a user-friendly golf course that's very pleasing to the eye. The players will enjoy it because it doesn't kill them to not hit the ball like Tiger Woods all day. And that's the biggest thing they're going to see, from the enjoyment standpoint. People will really enjoy this golf course."

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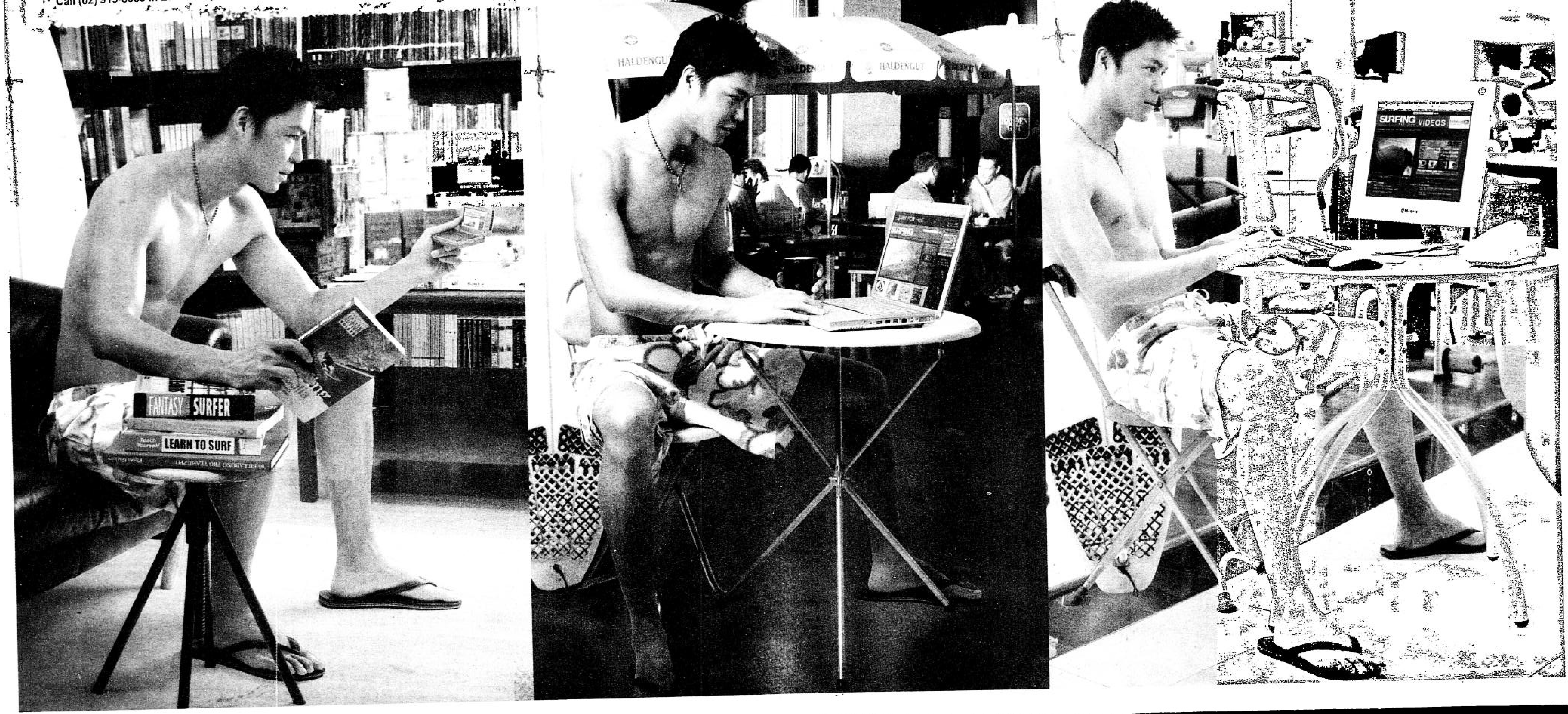

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Editor Nestor U. Torre
Assistant Editor Rito P. Asilo

Fans pay tribute to Nora Aunor in new book

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST Sunday, a book of articles about Nora Aunor was launched by the officers and members of the superstar's fan clubs. The new publication, "Si Nora sa Mga Noranian (Mga Paggunita at Pagtatapat)," edited by Nestor de Guzman, comes as a timely tribute to the currently beleaguered show biz icon.

We've received a copy of the book, and we're impressed with the number of fans (around 50) who took the time to recall how Nora had impinged on their lives, and put those thoughts down on paper.

Nora must feel very gratified to have such loyal and articulate followers, and their essays should give her a much-needed boost, now that she has to contend with her legal troubles in the States.

Recognizable names

Some of the writers in the book are recognizable names—Boy Abunda, Ramon Bayron, Noel Boado, Lady Guy, Domingo Landicho, Pit Maliksi, Danton Remoto, Noel Vera—while the rest are "just fans."

—Or, are they? Librada Oria teaches catechism in Sampaloc. Mario Roxas is a CPA in the States. Jorge Demafeliz works in a bank in Saudi Arabia. Leonel Escota is a treasury specialist in a German bank in New York.

Milagros Long teaches in Japan. Marlon Antolin is an architect. Tim Capellan is the president and CEO of a retail marketing and management firm. —And "Pacita Macaspac" is the alias of a militant activist who's also a diehard Noranian!

What do these background notes indicate? That Nora's unique mystique affects and dazzles more than just the *masa* fan-atic. That's because Nora is a bigger achiever than most stars, having come up with some thespic masterworks that impress even demanding film and culture buffs, as well as people who are artists and achievers in their own right.

Evolution

As we read their essays, we're struck by how strongly Nora's landmark movies have come to bear on the writers' personal histories. Sometimes, it feels like the writers use Nora's starrers as signposts or landmarks for their own evolution as people!

Why does Nora have this unique hold on so many different kinds of people, from the screaming *palaban* fan who'll tear your hair out if you demigrate the Superstar, to the litterateur and critic who's as circumspect as can be?

The writers in this book cite her beautiful singing voice, expressive eyes, *kayumanggi* coloring, "cute" frame and height, acting prowess, the fact that she "represents" most non-*tisoy* Filipinos, her having come from humble origins, her humility, shyness and lack of affectation, her love for her fans, her generosity, the hope and transcendence she represents—etc.!

Negative traits

To be sure, they also acknowledge her negative traits, which drive other people up the wall. But, the book is a tribute, not a rigorously objective character analysis, so if it errs on the side of excessive adulation, that's perfectly understandable.

Nora's fans don't need to be encouraged to get themselves a copy of the book. But, even if you aren't a fan, you may want to read it as well, because it says a lot about the unique phenomenon of star-fan relationships in this country.

Si Nora Aunor sa mga Noranian
Mga Paggunita at Pagtatapat
Nestor De Guzman
Patnugot

AUNOR. Her fans' essays should give her a much-needed boost, now that she has to contend with her legal troubles in the States.

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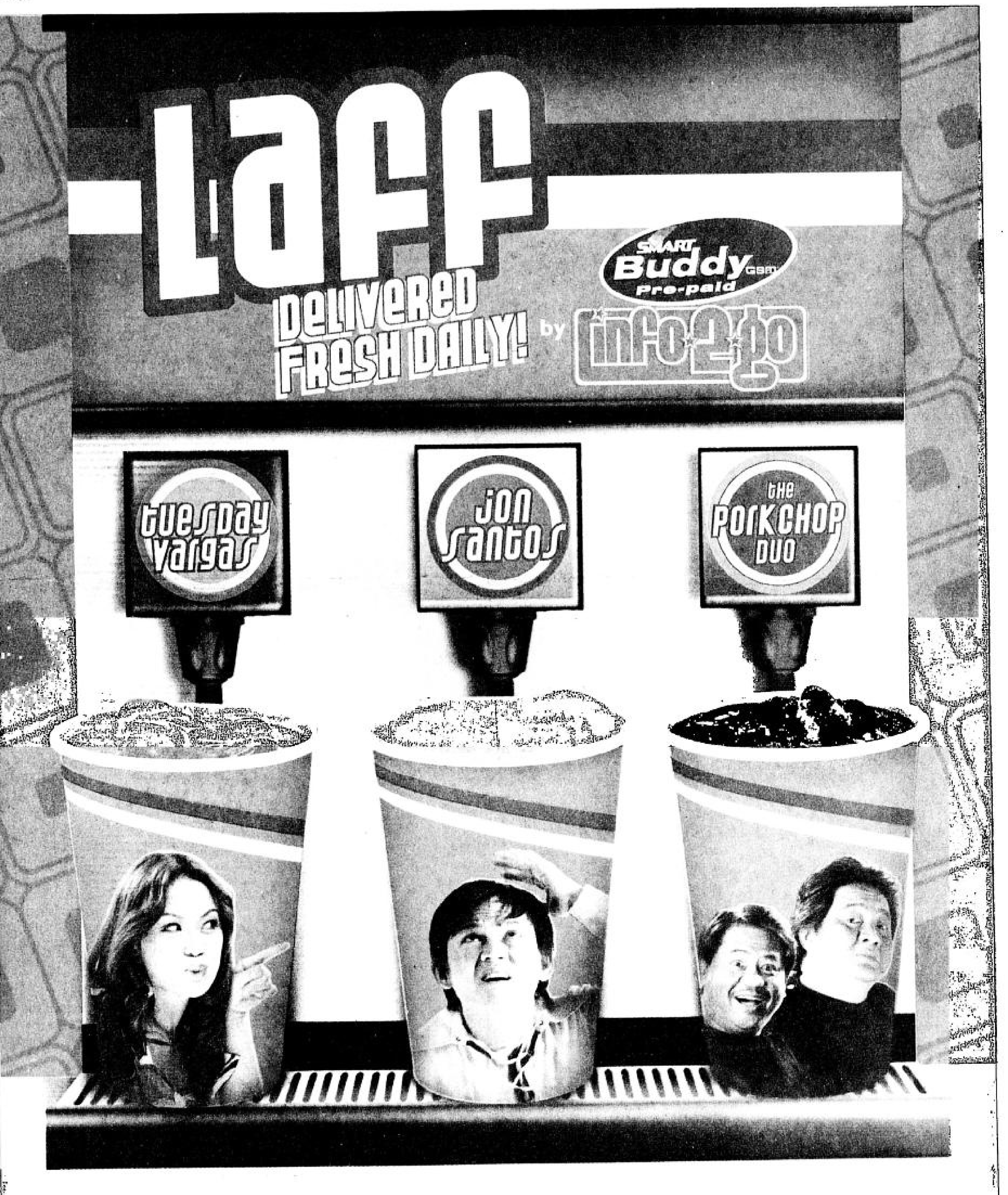

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Special places, exotic locales in the movies

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM Marcy Tan: **"I love watching travelogues, documentaries and movies that feature exotic places. Any tips on films with exciting locales? Are they shot where they're actually set?"**

Indeed, cinema transports people to places they've never been. In the Leonardo DiCaprio starrer "The Beach," the mysterious sand-and-shore location featured in the film is supposed to be surrounded by mountains. In fact, the mountainous terrain of the movie's locale has a large gap between two gigantic boulders.

Mountain

During postproduction, film editors had to superimpose a "fake" mountain to create the desired effect. The paradise-like setting was actually shot in two places: Ko Phi Phi Leh and Phuket. Unfortunately, both spots were severely affected by the tsunami that ravaged Asia last Dec. 26.

Ewan McGregor ("Star Wars") wanted so much to do "The Beach," but despite director Danny Boyle's ("Trainspotting") backing, the producers wanted Leo's marquee appeal. To this day, the former bosom buddies still don't speak.

Sleepy town

Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" was not filmed in Nazareth and Jerusalem, it was shot in the sleepy town of Matera in Basilicata, Italy.

On the other hand, Elia Suleiman's 2002 Cannes Jury Prize winner, "Divine Intervention," the controversial tragicomic hodgepodge of Israeli-Palestinian life, was filmed in East Jerusalem and in Nazareth, Israel. However, the production's "bombing" scenes were filmed in France, because they couldn't get a permit to work in Israel.

JIM CAVIEZEL AND MEL GIBSON. Their controversial film, "The Passion of the Christ," was shot in Italy.

"DOGVILLE." Minimalist sets were constructed in Sweden and Denmark.

Lars von Trier's shocking masterpiece, "Dogville," which starred Nicole Kidman, was shot indoors. It was set in a fictitious town in Colorado, but a minimalist set was constructed in Trollhattan, Sweden and the Filmbyen Hvidovre studio in Denmark. Ironically, the Danish director, whose follow-up, "Manderlay," is currently competing at Cannes, has never set foot in the United States!

Migration

In Caroll Ballard's "Fly Away Home," 13-year-old Amy (Anna Paquin) sought the help of her father (Jeff Daniels) to assist in the survival migration to the south of orphaned geese. The idyllic location was filmed in Port Perry, Ontario, Canada.

In Nick Cassavetes' "The Notebook," Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams rowed their boat in dreamy, swan-littered Ashley River in Charleston, South Carolina, but the beach scenes were shot in Los Angeles, California.

In Michael Curtiz's "Casablanca," the cast and crew did not leave American soil for the romantic Casablanca locale, which was supposed to be an exotic port in North Africa!

Learning from Koreans' success in entertainment

By Nestor U. Torre

LOCAL viewers and media observers have been struck by the popularity of Korean telenovelas on Philippine TV. Many of them think this is better than the "invasion" of Latin-American shows some years back, because this time, the characters at least look Asian.

WON BIN. Lead actor of popular telenovela, "Friends."

Colonial mentality

Others, however, remain dissatisfied, because they still see colonial mentality at work here, and because they feel that, foreign productions, no matter what their provenance, "steal" work opportunities away from local TV people.

So, they hope that, sooner rather than later, the current Korean "wave" of TV shows will lose its ability to fascinate viewers here.

Seen from a wider perspective, however, it doesn't look like the trend will be running its course soon, because it's only part of a larger Korean pop-culture initiative that has been enjoying spectacular success, not just in the Philippines, but also in many other countries in Asia.

The latest statistics show that more than 100 million people in Asia are viewing Korean entertainment each day, and South Korea's culture industry is growing four times more briskly than other businesses in that country, with sales almost doubling in only one year's time (from US$42 million in 2003 to $72 million in 2004)!

In addition, the entertainment that Korea has exported to other countries has boosted its tourism figures, with more tourists making it a point to visit the beautiful locations featured in Korean productions, contributing to a 40 percent increase in tourist arrivals in only one year.

Even the more positive showing of Korean airline companies in the stock market has been attributed in part to the popularity and tourist-drawing ability of Korean entertainment, resulting in better business for Korea's air travel firms.

Laurels

But, South Korean government and entertainment industry leaders aren't resting on their laurels. They know full well that viewers can get bored in quick order, so they're bent on further improving the shows they're exporting, to make sure that their popularity will be sustained.

And they're putting their money where their mouths are: They're bankrolling a billion-dollar entertainment complex, schools, marketing offices—whatever it takes to keep the good times rolling.

Attitudes

Filipino entertainment industry leaders and their counterparts in government can learn a lot from the attitudes vivified by these initiatives.

In this country, we tend to think of entertainment as fluff, but the Koreans have proven that it can be big business, with similarly important effects on other industries. That's why they're more than willing to invest a lot of money to make even more in the future. Are we prepared to do the same?

New actor introduced in 'Bikini Open'

By Remy M. Umerez

WHEN "Bikini Open" opened this week, moviegoers discovered a refreshing face in 19-year-old J.E. Sison.

SISON. Fast learner.

In the sex-comedy directed by Jeffrey Jeturian, J.E. is entrusted a role as meaty as those portrayed by Alfred Vargas and Rafael Rosell.

Producer Robbie Tan is pleased at how well J.E. registers on the screen, and how fast a learner he is.

"Bikini Open" takes viewers behind the scenes of a sexy pageant—but it doesn't stop there. It likewise satirizes public affairs programs that go in for entertainment at the expense of objectivity and truth.

Private lives

The private lives of aspiring contestants like J.E.'s character, Billy, in the pageant are exposed by a TV journalist in order to get high ratings. Billy's main goal is to become a singer and; in the process, to find his real father.

A workshop under Gina Alajar made it easier for J.E. to relax on his first shooting day. The motivation Jeturian provided was also a big help.

What caught J.E. by surprise was when he was required to wear a skimpy bikini. He almost backed out, but finally agreed when Jeffrey assured him that he wouldn't make him look awkward.

J.E. expressed pleasure when he saw himself in the poster of the movie. "*Palagi kong sinasabi noon na, makita ko lang ang* picture *ko sa alinmang* poster, happy *na ako.* I never thought that day would come!"

Runner-up

Born on May 13, John Emmanuel or J.E. was a runner-up of a male beauty contest held in Subic Bay, his hometown. In 2003, he was persuaded by friends to join the Mr. Pogi pageant on TV.

On the first week of the contest proper, J.E. got eliminated. He said that he failed to express himself well during the Q and A portion, because he was overcome by shyness.

A talent scout who watched the contest brought him to ABS-CBN Talent Center, and management liked what it saw.

As Robbie puts it: "J.E.'s shyness is appealing. It works to his advantage. His face is *maamo at kawawa*—everyone wants to take care of him."

If things don't work out in show business, J.E.'s plan is to resume his nursing course at FEU.

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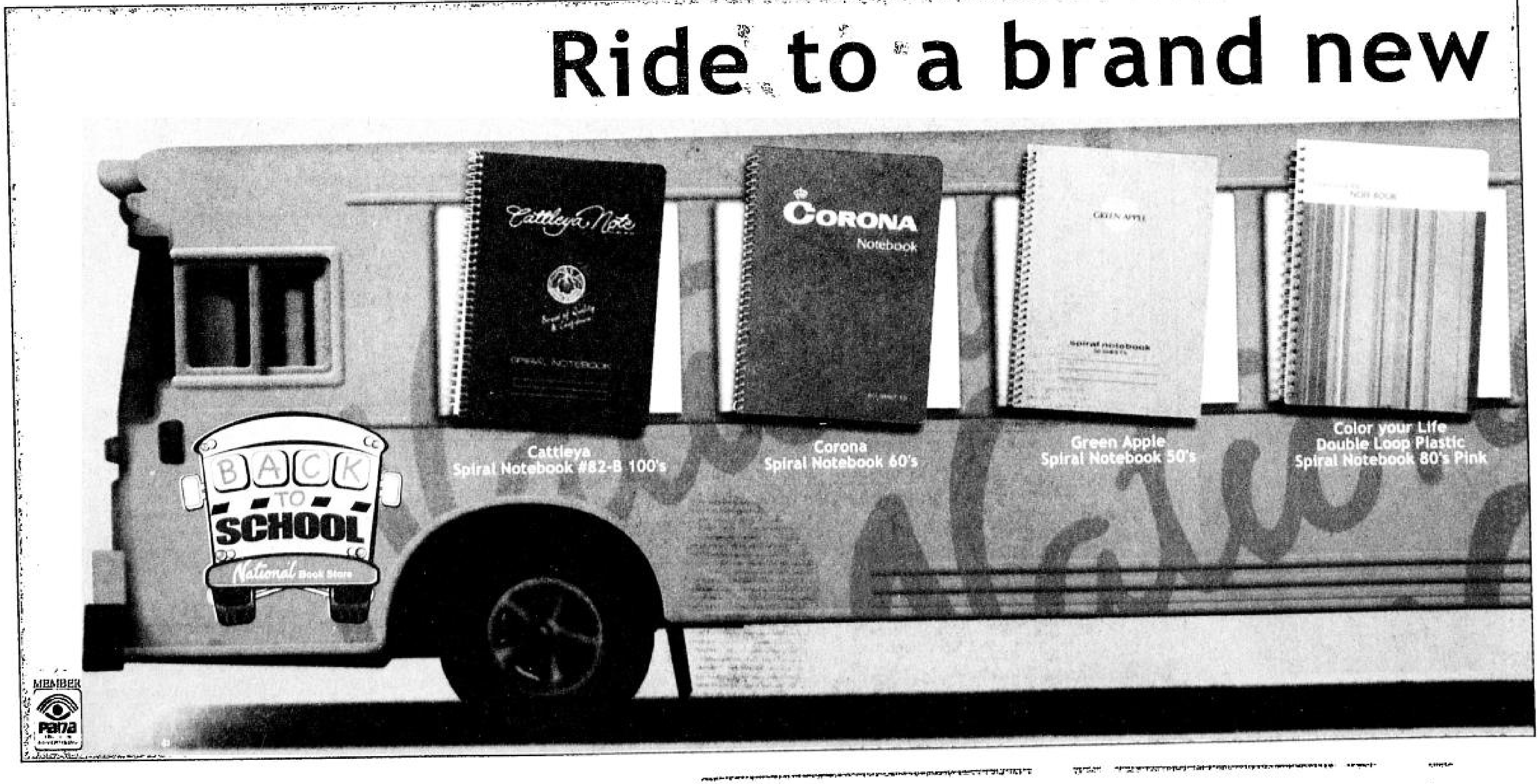

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Nina doesn't live up to hype in live album

By Noelani Torre

THERE'S been no escaping Nina for the past three years. Ever since she debuted on the scene, the so-called "Soul Siren" has been appearing here, there and everywhere. And, with the recent triple-platinum success of her "Nina Live!" album, it looks like we'll be hearing and seeing even more of her!

Covers

This collection of live covers is the singer's third record, and its success is a testament to Nina's popularity—but not, we must say, to her talent. If anything, this non-studio-embellished album shows us that the singer still has a long way to go before she can qualify as a major diva.

Sure, there's been a great deal of hype about her for some time now, but hype does not necessarily indicate the existence of eat-you-heart-out talent.

Hype is just hype, and we're sorry to say that Nina does not live up to hers—and we base this conclusion on several hours of listening to her live compilation.

Going unplugged is one of the best ways to measure a singer's worth, after all, inasmuch as studio equipment can cover up a multitude of "sins."

Not that Nina has a large number of failings—but the few that she does have are rather conspicuous.

The biggest of these is her distressing tendency to go out of tune. You can forgive your six-year-old sister for not hitting the right notes, but not someone who's being touted as a diva. Singing in tune is the least one expects from professional singers, after all.

Direction

Another thing we don't particularly like is her joining the *birit*-style school of singing. It doesn't approach eardrum-shattering Regine Velasquez levels yet, but she seems to be leaning in that direction. Unfortunately, her voice has a thin and forced quality—and it makes for painful listening.

Nina, in this album at least, has a knack for leaching the vitality out of her material. Take carrier single, "Love Moves in Mysterious Ways," for example. A dulled-down version of the Julia Fordham original, it's uninventive and soporific—a state of things brought about by the lack of dynamism in Nina's rendering.

Then again, it hit No. 1—so maybe it's just us! Have a listen at the material, and judge for yourself.

As for us, we won't be listening to Nina's music until she starts showing a little more of the soul she's supposed to have in spades.

Songs

Other songs in the 19-track "Nina Live!" collection include Celine Dion's "I Love You Goodbye," Chaka Khan's "Through the Fire," Jennifer Love Hewitt's "Cool With You," Aaliyah's "At Your Best," Brenda Russel's "Piano in the Dark," Gloria Estefan's "Anything for You," and the Eagles' "I Can't Tell You Why."

NINA. Distressing tendency to go out of tune.

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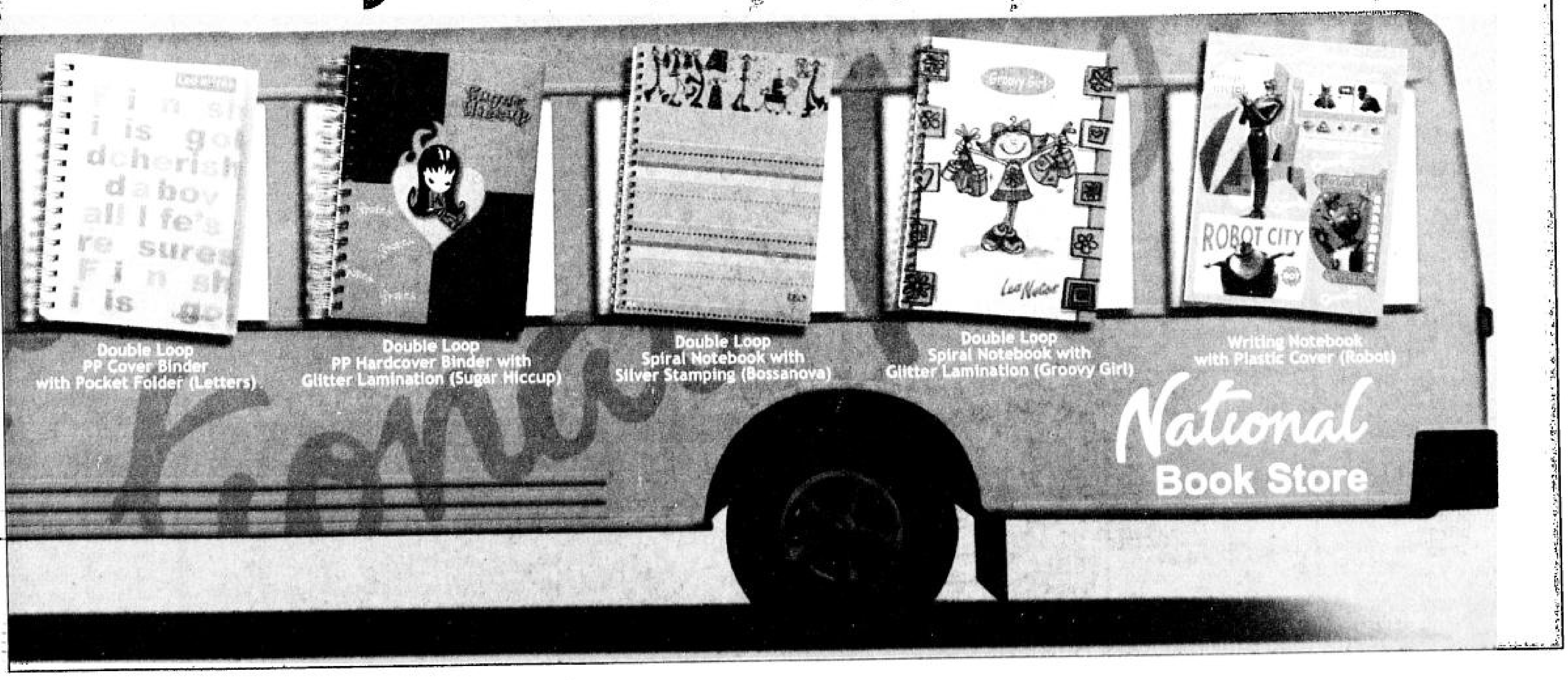
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R. Valencia and S. Bismark

At the beach

GOING to the beach is not only fun, it's also beneficial to our well-being. Here are some do's and don'ts when you're going to the beach:

1. Leave the junk behind. Don't bring unhealthy food such as chips and candies. They pollute the body and the environment.

Natural

Get as natural as you can with your diet. Buy fruits and veggies, instead. Satisfy your craving for sweets with mangoes and watermelons, which are not just sweet, but also rich in vitamins and minerals. There's fresh tomatoes, fern tops or tops of sweet potato and *sayote*.

You can make a salad out of grilled eggplants with chopped tomatoes. Indian mangoes are delicious when eaten alone, or when they're mixed with tomatoes.

Artificial drinks

2. Leave the artificial drinks behind. Practically all of them are loaded with sugar. They stress your internal organs rather than bring relief or sustenance to the body. The best drink is coconut water. It is refreshing and nourishing.

3. Do deep breathing exercises. Expel the bad air in your lungs and nourish your cells with clean air. The sea breeze will not only cool your body externally, but it will also recharge you internally. Negative ions abound in areas near large bodies of water, they will bring your body to a state of greater well-being.

4. Bathing in sea water is not only for recreation. It's also for healing and rejuvenation. Salt water heals skin problems such as eczema and acne.

Rejuvenation

5. Aside from physical and mental rejuvenation, going to the beach can provide spiritual rejuvenation, especially during sunrise and sunset.

A person can meditate and give praise to the original source of all the beauty and splendor that surround us. As we view the vastness of the ocean, we realize our limitations and insignificance. We are humbled by the greatness of the Supreme Person, and offer our gratitude and respect. Then, we experience true spiritual satisfaction.

SATURDAY Special

NOW SHOWING

Sex, fun and gore

By Rito P. Asilo

"Bikini Open"

D: Jeffrey Jeturian
S: Cherry Pie Picache, Diana Zubiri, Francine Prieto

JEFFREY Jeturian's latest opus takes a tongue-in-cheek stab at the intrusiveness of media, particularly into the lives of bikini competition participants—a number of them willing victims in exchange for their 15 minutes of fame.

After a dip in her TV show's ratings, Susan (Cherry Pie Picache) takes drastic measures to spruce up her public affairs program's faltering viewership. She spies on the pageant's contestants and the quirky characters around them:

A gym instructor (Rafael Rosell) who's as enthusiastic in sowing his wild oats and siring the children of gullible women as he's committed to his strict workout regimen; an ambitious wannabe actress (Diana Zubiri) and her adoring tricycle-driver admirer (Alfred Vargas), who joins the competition to be her chaperone; a gay-friendly, bastard son (J.E. Sison) in search of his long-lost father; a cocksure beauty-queen type (Nina Ricci Alagao) whom everybody expects to win the crown, and a beautiful, popular cheerleader type (Francine Prieto), who joins the fray simply "because I can!" As expected, the dirt Susan digs up on these colorful people is more than enough to put her show back on top. But, at what price?

As with his previous productions, Jeturian delivers a cerebral film that entertains as much as it provokes. Our few quibbles: Picache's character, who should have been the heart of the movie, is much too driven, and comes off as inhuman, even with her understandable motivation; Ricky Davao's character is too campy to be believable, and the film spends too much camera time on the gay threesome who serve as hosts of the competition.

But, Jeffrey's partnership with Robbie Tan continues to produce movies that add substance and innovation to the often salacious and exploitative sex-film genre. The director has a way of mixing humor and candor that transcends the *Pinoy's* penchant for slapstick comedy. Jeturian confronts issues with a clear, confident cinematic voice, and successfully coaxes good performances from his attractive actors, particularly Zubiri, Prieto, Rosell, Vargas and Sison, as well as from Michael de Mesa, Eugene Domingo and theater actor Andy Bais.

"House of Wax"

D: Jaume Collet-Serra
S: Elisha Cuthbert, Chad Michael Murray, Paris Hilton

Six college students head out to Baton Rouge to secure tickets to a football game. Along the way, they find their car's fan belt severed—a situation that brings them to Ambrose, an almost-deserted town that seems stuck in a time warp.

Carly (Elisha Cuthbert) and Wade (Jared Padalecki) find the cranky gas-station attendant (Brian Van Holt) in an eerie memorial service. As they wander into town, they run across Trudy's House of Wax, which showcases an impressive wax collection of real-looking wax figurines. Then, Nick (Chad Michael Murray), Carly's wayward twin, begins to panic when his sister disappears!

There's something fascinating about ghost town flicks. Serra's production has an initially slow pace and predictable story. Nevertheless, it is an enjoyably terrifying romp that features good-looking, but half-witted college students, creepy strangers, pickup trucks with unseen drivers, and gratuitous servings of blood and gore that are briskly and violently staged.

The resulting bloodshed will make you wince and squirm. But then again, you don't expect to fall in love, go dramatic, or understand the intricacies of world politics while watching horror films, do you? Beware, however, of the meaningless prattle of its logically-challenged characters, It may be hazardous to your brain cells. And, while the infamous Paris Hilton doesn't come off as the next Meryl Streep in the cinematic horizon, she isn't all that bad. Really!

"The Amityville Horror"

D: Andrew Douglas
S: Ryan Reynolds, Melissa George

One year after Ronald Defeo—claiming to heed orders from "voices" within the house—confessed to the systematic slaughter of his entire family with a .35 caliber rifle on Nov. 13, 1974, newlyweds George and Kathy Lutz (Ryan Reynolds and Melissa George, respectively), along with the latter's three children from a previous marriage, moved into the Defeos' 1692 Dutch colonial house to make a fresh start.

Unperturbed by the creepy mansion's blood-soaked past ("Houses don't kill people. People kill people," George reasoned.), the couple jumped at the deal of a lifetime, eager to start weaving their domestic dreams into reality. Barely 28 days later, the family abandons their dream home—physically unscathed, but forever haunted by the mansion's wrath.

Andrew Douglas' remake of the 1979 film adaptation of Jay Anson's

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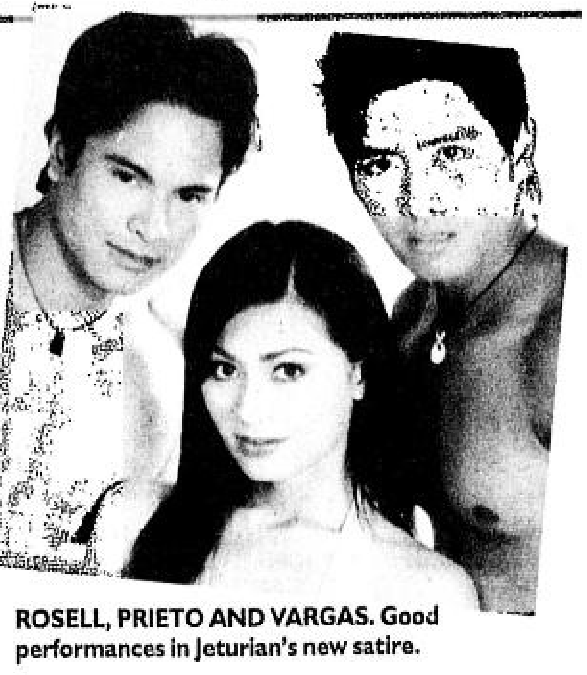

ROSELL, PRIETO AND VARGAS. Good performances in Jeturian's new satire.

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Tears?

This young lady's soul soars high with music. Rachel strikes home with heartfelt and emotion-filled song renditions, making people feel, as she herself feels, the sounds of life. Claiming glory in local and international singing competitions, she proves that music is simply in her heart. And this is, truly, what makes her the ultimate champion.

Moved by the melody of life, Rachel has joined the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP), a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to alleviating corneal blindness in Filipinos, and Visine Refresh, a tears substitute. On its tenth year, EBFP keeps the hope of restored sight alive by making corneal transplant surgery accessible to all, and prevents more unnecessary blindness by educating the public on the importance of healthy eyes.

In line with this campaign, each purchase of Visine Refresh will mean a donation to the EBFP in support of its fight against corneal blindness.

You, too, can help the EBFP by donating cash, or signing on as a cornea or eye donor. Join Rachel, Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines in the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign, and ensure that our fellow Filipinos see a bright future ahead.

For additional information,
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Rachel Ann Go
Champion/Singer

Photography: Jun de Leon

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'Star Wars' makes its final bow

By Nestor U. Torre

FROM 1971 to 2005 is more than just the passage of 34 years, it's the chronological history of the making of the "Star Wars" screen legend which has become a landmark on the pop-cultural scene, with its sci-fi restaging of the age-old conflict between Good and Evil.

As the film franchise is currently showing its final installment, "Revenge of the Sith," thus concluding its decades-long storytelling, this chronology shows how "Star Wars" has become such an iconic part of so many people's lives:

Project

1971, George Lucas begins writing "Star Wars." 1975, Twentieth Century-Fox greenlights the project. 1976, production begins on the first film, "A New Hope."

1977, "A New Hope" is released. 1979, production begins on the second film, "The Empire Strikes Back." 1980, "Empire" is released.

1982, "Return of the Jedi" begins production. And "A New Hope" debuts on VHS video—for rent only. 1983, "Jedi" is released. 1987, "Star Wars" 10th Anniversary convention is held in Los Angeles.

1994, Lucas begins writing "Star Wars" prequels. 1995, "Star Wars Trilogy" debuts on VHS video. 1997, production begins on "The Phantom Menace." And special editions of "Star Wars Trilogy" are released. 1999, "Phantom" is released.

2000, production begins on "Attack of the Clones." 2002, "Clones" is released, the first major live-action digital release. 2003, production begins on "Revenge of the Sith." 2004, "Star Wars Trilogy" is released on DVD. And 2005, "Revenge of the Sith" is released.

CHRISTENSEN, MCGREGOR AND JACKSON. Topbill final installment of George Lucas' sci-fi series.

More to the point, the release of the last "Star Wars" production encourages viewers to make thematic and psychic sense of the film franchise's emblematic story, which has taken decades to tell.

Sense of wonder

What *was* that all about? Let's hear it from a self-confessed buff:

Peter Jackson, director of the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy (which has its own iconic story to tell): "'Star Wars' smashed open the possibilities of what film could do. It was the perfect film to inspire a sense of wonder!"

Indications of how deeply "Star Wars" has affected the public's pop consciousness:

"Jedi" and "the dark side" are listed in the Oxford English Dictionary. On TV, "The Simpsons," "Saturday Night Live" and other shows love to use the "Star Wars" saga as a touchtone to elicit smiles.

In sports, the Boston Red Sox have named their archrivals, the New York Yankees, "The Evil Empire"—a moniker that the Yankees have gleefully accepted.

At school, educators use the saga to teach their students math, science and language. Museums draw huge crowds with "Star Wars" exhibits. At Disney parks around the world, "Star Tours" is a favorite attraction.

History

When it was released in November 2004, the "Star Wars Trilogy" became the best-selling DVD boxed set in history in many countries. Everyday, millions of people log on to the Internet to play "Star Wars: Galaxies," a multiplayer online game.

The legacy of "Star Wars" has also impacted on the way movies are made, with Lucas' Industrial Light & Magic coming up with many filmmaking innovations that other producers have benefited from.

These include astonishing visual effects, improved motion-picture sound technology like THX and digital sound; non-linear, digital editing systems; advances in computer-generated animation; and digital motion-picture production techniques and equipment, like high-definition digital video cameras and videotape.

Why sequels and prequels click with viewers

By Behn Cervantes

"STAR Wars," George Lucas' spectacularly successful series has come up with its latest sequel. This one, however, is called a prequel. Even the more outstanding "Lord of the Rings" was not chronologically filmed as we expect a series to be made.

Popular

Another popular movie, "The Exorcist," has come up with "Dominion: A Prequel to the Exorcist." "The Dominion," director Paul Schrader's version of the horror classic, as opposed to the "re-shot" version that Morgan Creek preferred to release commercially, "Exorcist: The Beginning." Morgan Creek thought that Schrader's version did not have enough gore. But, the reshot version flopped!

The move disappointed Filipino fans of Billy Crawford.

CRAWFORD (LEFT) AND SKARSGARD. The other "Exorcist" prequel.

When he was cast in the prequel, there was ample domestic publicity about his coup. We all know how *that* turned out.

This unfortunate development was followed by rumors that Cesar Montano's Hollywood film, "The Great Raid," wouldn't be as great as expected, and that it was headed straight for television! Fortunately, a private preview was held in Manila to prove otherwise, and that Cesar's co-starring vehicle with Benjamin Bratt was no fluke.

Now, we will finally see Billy's own debut in Big Time Cinema. Very soon, the Montano break, too! As Shakespeare said, "All's well that ends well."

So, why are series so popular? I guess you can't have enough of a good thing. As a kid, I recall eagerly awaiting the Bob Steele cowboy serials. And Lone Ranger and Tonto were not far behind.

Jungles

If you preferred the jungles of Africa, there was Tarzan. His distinct yell echoed through the jungle, alerting apes and other denizens of the forest that the King of the Jungle was coming.

When Olympic swimming champion, Johnny Weismuller, was considered too old and fat for the Tarzan role, he dropped his leather bikini and donned a hunter's uniform as "Jungle Jim." He no longer had to fight crocs and lions—he had a gun, instead. John Hall succeeded Weismuller as Jungle Jim.

Johnny Sheflied, Tarzan's Boy, grew up to become Bomba, the Jungle Boy, but he never became Tarzan. Maureen O'Sullivan, who played Jane, later became the wife of director John Farrow and the mother of Mia—as well as the mother-in-law of Frank Sinatra!

Wanderlust

Producers tap and exploit the child in all of us, and whet our appetites for this wanderlust.

As long as we yearn for unimaginable adventure, strange places and brave heroes and heroines, there will always be sequels and, yes, prequels. They nurture our dreams and give us respite from the harsh realities of the world.

Degree from university abroad

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

MANY Filipinos dream of getting a college degree from a foreign university, particularly in the US. Besides easy access to latest trends, a diploma from a respected educational institution provides financially lucrative employment here and abroad.

Northwood University in Florida is where 22-year-old Cebuano Andrew Sarmiento will finish his marketing management degree.

Sarmiento only needs about two years to get his diploma from Northwood. He spent his first two years at the Center for International Education in Cebu City. How's that?

Special credits

Subjects taken in CIE are given special credits in more than 200 universities and colleges worldwide. CIE is the only school in the Philippines that has accreditation from Cambridge University, UK.

Sarmiento chose to continue pursuing his course in Northwood last year. In a recent phone interview, he explained how he copes with his studies: "At CIE, I'm used to presentation-based learning and intensive analysis."

At Northwood, students are given online assignments. If a student wants to read up in advance, all he needs to do is check out the website of his professor for specific lecture guides.

Family and friends

Sarmiento admitted that being away from family and friends can be very lonely. In Florida, he shares a flat with three other foreign students, and checks his email every four hours!

He added: "It's no joke—it's tough! But, sacrifices have to be made. Loneliness is temporary, but education is forever."

Call CIE-Makati at (632) 887-2828, CIE-Cebu at (032) 412-7622, or email study@cie.edu.

Email mandynavasero@photo-pro.com.ph

Taiwan's art films win awards but lose audiences

TAIPEI—Movie buff Kevin Ruan goes to the cinema every other week, but he can't remember the last time he went to see a film that was made in Taiwan.

"I like Hollywood movies better. When I go to see a movie, I look for something exciting, entertaining, relaxing or easy to understand," the 32-year-old marketing executive said.

Categories

Taiwan cinema does not usually fall into these categories.

Famed for arthouse movies that win awards at international festivals, Taiwan directors have been dubbed box-office poison at home, because local audiences think their work is irrelevant or just plain boring.

Bigger-budget Hollywood productions dominate with more than 95 percent of box-office sales on this island of 23 million. Taiwan films accounted for only 1.13 percent of ticket sales in 2004, and just 0.3 percent in 2003.

"There is no country like Taiwan, which makes internationally acclaimed movies, but whose people show no appreciation nor support," said Peggy Chou, director of the Department of Motion Picture Affairs under the Government Information Office.

Campaign

"This is very strange, even sad," said Chou, whose department has launched a campaign to revive the ailing film industry.

Some people in the business lay the blame on arty, elitist filmmakers, not audiences.

They say Taiwan's "New Cinema"—which began to win recognition in the 1980s when directors like Ang Lee, Hou Hsiao-hsien and Tsai Ming-liang took home top prizes from Berlin, Cannes and Venice—lost box office appeal when the focus of filmmaking shifted from entertainment to pure art.

"You make films for the people, not for yourself," said critic and independent filmmaker Peter Wang.

Reuters

5,820 signatures vs exploitative . . .

From page A3-4

(Kaisa Akong Mag-aalay ng Sarili para sa Sambayanan). The group recently informed us about its major initiative:

"We, students in public and private schools in Cavite, together with our teachers, parents, parishioners and other citizens are very concerned about what's happening in our electronic media, especially TV.

"We are saddened by too much emphasis on ratings rather than content, the *'bulgarism'* of some talents rather than being models in morals for viewers, shows that are excessively commercialized, etc.

"We believe drastic changes have to be made. As viewers, it's our right to ask for them: For our TV people to provide inspiration and be instruments for change. Give positive values about life, family and needs. Strengthen the relationship between different sectors of society. Inspire to create rather than differentiate. And bring laughter to our lives, instead of focusing on sensational stories.

Importance

"We're hoping that with our signature campaign, we can instill and promote in the lives of concerned Filipinos the importance of inspiring and values-oriented children and youth programs on TV." (Framed by Bro. RC Cifra, sfo.)

To show that it means business, Ka'malay'an has sent us a total of 5,820 signatures from students of Imus Pilot Elementary School, Anabu I ES, Anabu II ES, Pasong Buaya ES, Imus National high School, Del Pilar Academy, St. Gregory Academy, the District Supervisor, principals, guidance counselors, teachers, diocesan priests and deacons, secular Franciscan Order regional officers and members, Our Lady of Fatima Pastoral Center parishioners,

Legion of Mary-Queen of Peace Presidium-Cavite, Samahan ng mga Kristiyanong Kabataan ng Anabu, lay ministers, Kristong Hari Quasi-Parish parishioners and lay leaders, barangay captains, pedicab drivers, security guards, Regatta Classics Subdivision homeowners, professionals, Imus Rural bank employees—etc.!

Get the picture, erring TV people? As the group's signatories show, the campaign against irresponsible and exploitative television has come down to the grassroots level, where the viewing numbers are.

Conservatives

Now, it isn't just the "educated" people whom you sneeringly describe as "conservatives and self-appointed moral guardians" who are complaining—it's practically everybody! And, if you don't wise up and shape up, they won't stop at complaining and could use their numbers to persuade you to really listen to them, for sure and for good.

So, why not do the right thing, and listen to their legitimate complaints *now?*

SPECIAL guests at lifestyle magazine's launch include Boots Anson Roa, Rudy Fernandez, Lorna Tolentino, Efren Reyes Jr. and Pops Fernandez.

Kids' Choice Awards on Sunday

MONTAGE

ON May 22, Kids troop to the NBC Tent at Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, for Nickelodeon's Kids' Choice Awards, presented by Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdogs and Smart Kid, the cell phone for children.

Gates open at 3:45 p.m. Kids can win exciting prizes, play the Tricky Trivia Game, meet stars and Dora the Explorer, etc. The show is hosted by Bettina Carlos, Marco Mañalac, Sam Cocnepcion, Nicole Yulo, Ivan Ponciano and Moreen Guese.

Awards will go to kids' favorites in foreign and local movies, music, TV, books, and more! And all children get a chance at a sneak preview of the Kids' Choice Awards in Los Angeles.

Celebrity Living launched

Aster Amoyo's Global Publishing and Entertainment Corp. has launched its newest baby, Celebrity Living Magazine.

The new publication highlights homes and lifestyles of well-known personalities, with the maiden issue visiting the beautiful homes of Pops Fernandez, Imee Marcos, Bong and Lani Mercado, Julius and Tintin Babao, Ricky Reyes, Cristina Gonzales-Romualdez, Claire dela Fuente and Olsen Racela.

Visit MTV studio in Singapore

Apply for an MTV Credit Card now and be one of the three lucky cardholders who will visit the MTV studios in Singapore and meet MTV VJs Utt and Denise. You can also win gift packs from Chocolate Clothing Co., iPod minis, and designer timepieces from L TimeStudio. The electronic raffle draw is on Aug. 30.

Each MTV Credit Card application approved during the promo period will get one raffle entry. Every P300 charged to the MTV Credit Card will entitle the cardholder to one raffle entry. Log on to www.equitablecard.com/mtv.

Paolo turns on the heat

Paolo Bediones will never be looked at the same way again when he starts turning on the heat at Araneta Coliseum at 7 p.m. today for the much-awaited fashion event, "The 'C' Show: The Carter Underwear Fashion Show." Other daring celebrity models include Andrea del Rosario, Maureen Larrazabal, Hans Montenegro and some Viva Hot Babes and Hot Men.

Movies on TV

On HBO, May 21 at 9 a.m., "That Championship Season." 2:35 p.m., "Clueless." May 22 at 2 :50 p.m., "Babe." May 23 at 5:35 p.m., "Lost in Translation." May 24 at &;55 p.m., "The Matrix Revolutions." May 25 at 6 a.m., "The Remains of the Day." 8:15 p.m., "The Mirror Has Two Faces." 2:20 p.m., "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

On Cinemax, May 21 at 1 :45 p.m., "Ghosts of Mississippi." May 22 at 9 p.m., "Saving Emily." May 23 at 11 a.m., "Simone." May 24 at 8:15 a.m., "Scenes of the Crime." 7 p.m., "The Life of David Gale." 2:15 a.m., "Rebel Without a Cause." may 25 at 7:15 p.m., "The Cowboy Way."

The 'C' Show
The Carter Underwear Fashion Show
BEDIONES. Goes daring in Carter fashion show.

Sex, fun and gore

From page A3-1

true-to-life novel (about a haunted house in Long Island, New York) plays up the emotional and psychological dynamics between George and the three children of his new bride, the widow Kathy, to complement the film's pumped-up special effects.

Other than the unconventional casting of winsome funny guy Reynolds, however, this retread offers nothing noteworthy. But, there's something eerily disturbing about a horror film that is based on allegedly factual events.

What hits the nerve is not the stale scary-movie tactic the film utilizes—it's the thought of knowing that its story actually happened!

It's no wonder why, despite the mediocre cinematic merits of the 1979 original and its 2005 remake, the movie's bleak tale has consistently captured the gullible public's imagination.

And so, the legend of the house at No. 412 Amityville Street continues…

Biopics continue to fascinate viewers

By Nestor U. Torre

ALL of a sudden, biographical movies are "in": The life of Howard Hughes in "The Aviator," Ray Charles in "Ray," Bobby Darin in "Beyond the Sea"—and that's only the tip of the "biopic" iceberg!

Why does the film industry and its audience now favor films about real people? Some analysts say that it's part of the current obsession with celebrities. Others believe that viewers are in great need of inspiration these days, and nothing beats the life of a brave and principled man who's triumphed against all odds to inspire us to be similarly courageous and selfless in our own lives.

Persuasive motivation

Whatever the most persuasive motivation may be, we'll be seeing many other biographical movies on the big screen in the coming months.

A quick count informs us that there will be movies about Japanese Emperor Hirohito, former French President Francois Miterrand and German actor Horst Buchholz.

There are also quite a number of biopics about heroes, like resistance fighter Sophie Schol, and the hotel manager in "Hotel Rwanda" who saved many people from being killed in the genocide in 1994.

Come to think of it, a similar movie could be made about the Filipinos who enabled many Jews to come to Manila to avoid being sent to concentration camps in Europe during World War II. Any takers among local and foreign producers? It could be our "Schindler's List."

In general however, the local film scene isn't *simpatico* when it comes to biopics. Blame it on our generally escapist attitude when it comes to the movies.

SPACEY. Portrays singer Bobby Darin in "Beyond the Sea."

It wasn't always so, however. In 1939, Lamberto V. Avellana directed a film about guerilla leader, Macario Sakay. "The Moises Padilla Story" was filmed in 1961. Ishmael Bernal megged the historical drama, "El Vibora." Laurice Guillen directed "The Dolzura Cortez Story."

Other local biopics: "Celestina Sanchez *aka* Bubbles," "Asedillo," "Ang Alamat ni Julian Makabayan," "Pasukuin si Waway," "Baby Tsina," "Kumander Alibasbas," "Genghis Khan," "Bomba Arrienda," "Teniente Carlos Blanco," "Totoy Bato,"

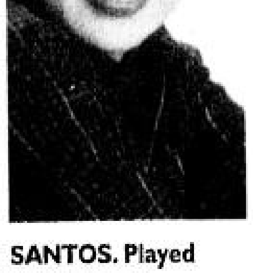
"Jose Rizal," "Sa Piling ng mga Sugapa," "Joe Pring," "Balweg, Rebel Priest," "Burlesk Queen," "Buhay at Pag-ibig ni Dr. Jose Rizal," "Asiong Salonga," "Hukom Bitay," "Bitayin si Baby Ama," "Victor Corpus," and religious biopics like "Santa Rita de Casia," "Lorenzo Ruiz," "Kristo" and "Sister Faustina."

Human struggle

Granted, quite a number of these local biopics are action-oriented productions, but there are enough truly biographical dramas that have inspired viewers with their tales of actual human struggle and triumph.

We trust that, starting this season, Filipino filmmakers will revive their zest for insightful and empathetic biographical movies that viewers can learn a lot from.

For starters, how about making the long-delayed film bio of Ninoy Aquino—in time for the 20th anniversary of the Edsa Revolution next year?



SANTOS. Played AIDS patient, Dolzura Cortez.

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP
12:15, 3:20, 6:25, 9:30

2 STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP
1:15, 4:20, 7:25, 10:30

3 STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP
12.45, 3:50, 6:55, 10:00

4 STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP
10:40,1:45, 4:50, 7:55,11:00

PREMIERE THEATRE STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP 11:45, 2:50, 5:55, 9:00

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1 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
12:35, 3:35, 6:35, 9:35
GP

2 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
11:05, 2:05, 5:05, 8:05, 11:05
GP

3 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
10:20, 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:20
GP

4 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
11:50, 2:50, 5:50, 8:50
GP

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 12:55,3:50,6:45,9:40	STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 10:30,1:30,4.35,7:20.10:15	STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 11:45,2:40,5:35,8:30
STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 12:20,3:15,6:10,9:05	AMITYVILLE HORROR R13 1:00,3:00,5:00,7:00,9:00	STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 11:10,2:05,5:00,8:00,10:50

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4 Star Wars Episode 3
5 Star Wars Episode 3
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CINEMA 5 STAR WARS : EPISODE III - GP 11:10 , 1:55 , 4:40 ,7:25 , 10:10

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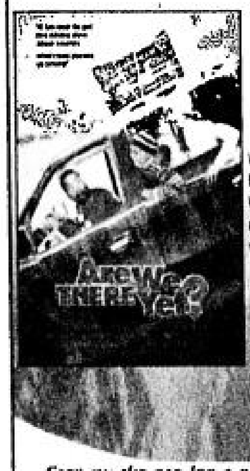

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11:40 FS / 12:10 MI / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10
10:20 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 1:10 END
633-8878

sm megamall cinema 1
THE INTERPRETER
12:00 FS / 12:15 MF / 3:10 / 5:45
7:35 LFS / 8:20 LMF / 10:10 END
STAR WARS III
[illegible]
633-1901

sm manila cinema 6
STAR WARS: EPISODE III
10:10 LFS / 10:25 MF / 1:10 / 3:55 / 6:40
3:05 LFS / 3.25 LMF / 12:05 END
523-8240

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: STAR WARS: EPISODE III
10.25 FS / 10:30 MF / 1:09 / 3.46 / 6:23
8:43 LFS/ 9:00 LMF / 11:20 END
CINEMA 3: STAR WARS: EPISODE III
10:50 FS / 11:00 MF / 1:39 / 4:16 / 6:53
9:13 LFS/ 9.30 LMF / 11.50 END
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METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
11 TRUMPETS
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm city fairview
1 IN GOOD COMPANY
2 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 ARE WE THERE YET?
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
8 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 THE PACIFIER
11 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
12 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

sm city north edsa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 RESERVED
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 THE AMITYVILLE
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

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8 IN GOOD COMPANY
9 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 xXx 2 :THE NEXT LEVEL
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
8 BIKINI OPEN
9 AMITYVILLE HORROR
10 KINDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city manila
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 RING OF NIBELUNGS
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 POOH HEFFALUMP
6 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
7 xXx2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
8 IN GOOD COMPANY
9 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
10 THE WEDDING DATE
11 THIS CAN BE LOVE
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 BIKINI OPEN

sm city bicutan
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 STAR WARS ; EPISODE III
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 BIKINI OPEN

sm city baguio
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 STAR WARS: EPISODE III

sm city batangas
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3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 BOOGEYMAN

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7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 IN GOOD COMPANY

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3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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sm city lucena
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2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 ALONE IN THE DARK

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 SIX
6 HONEY
7 BIKINI OPEN
8 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city iloilo
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 SAHARA
5 SIX
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 RESERVED
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city davao
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 GUESS WHO
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 STAR WARS: EPISODE III

sm city cagayan de oro
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 SAHARA
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

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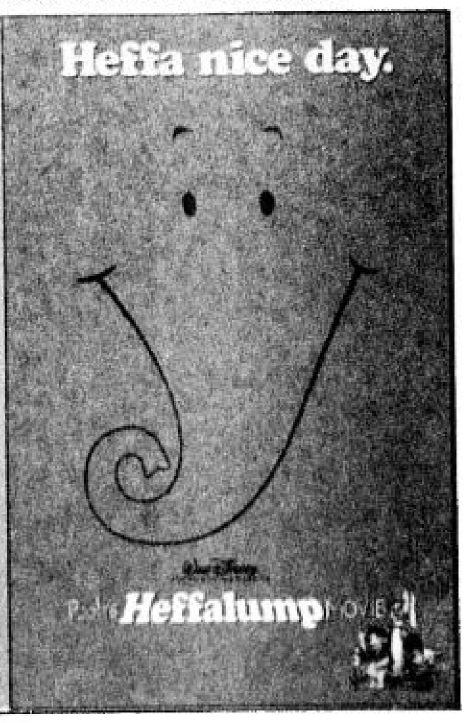


5,820 signatures vs exploitative, irresponsible TV

By Nestor U. Torre

TV people who still believe that they can do their worst on the tube to generate maximum ratings and revenues without the "passive" television audience complaining have another think coming.

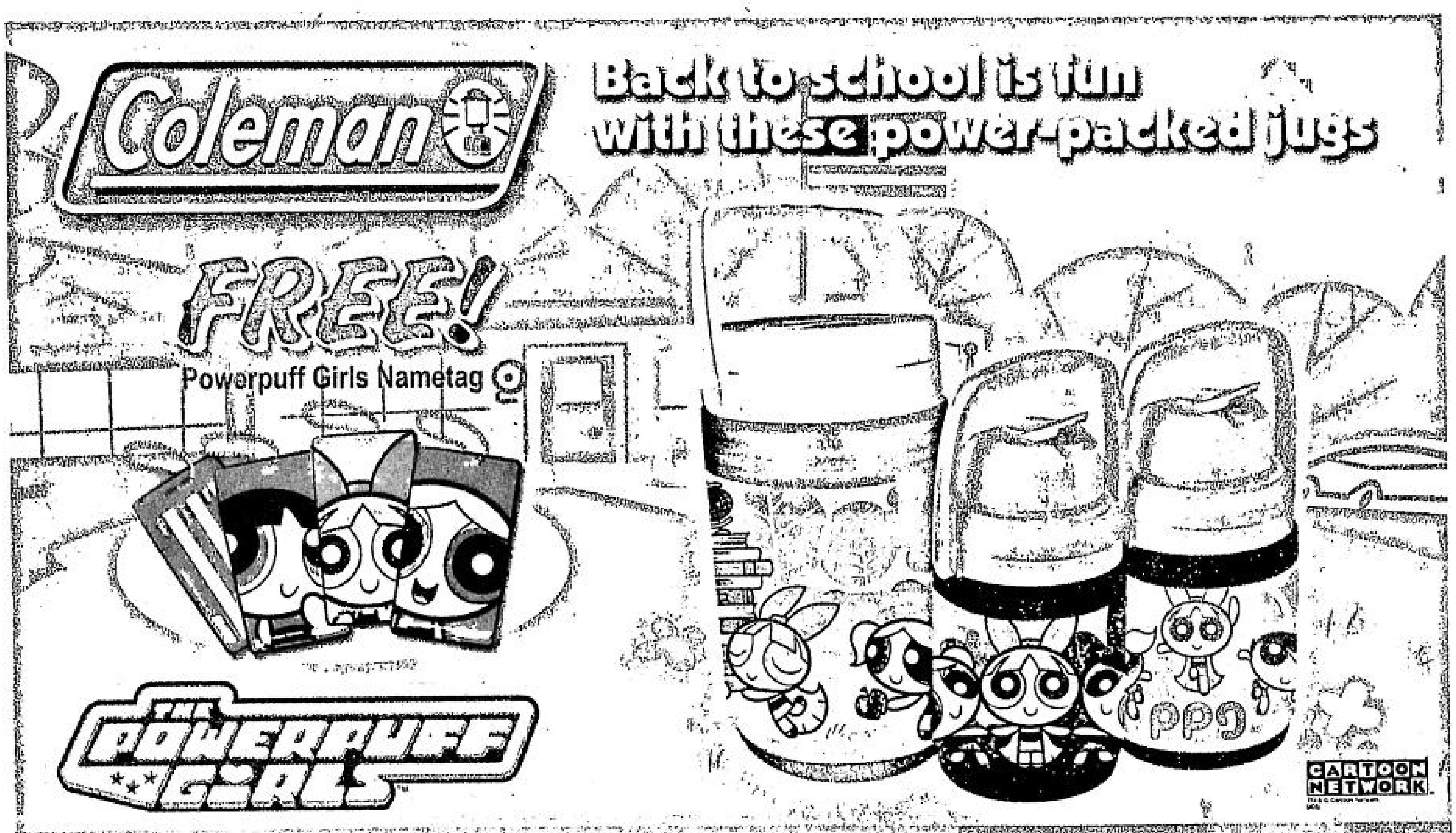
After decades of lethargy, ignorance, cluelessness, disdain and inaction, local viewers are starting to wise up to the negative effects of irresponsible and exploitative TV programs, particularly on impressionable and vulnerable children and adolescents.

Parents, educators and even some young viewers themselves are haranguing the TV channels and media outlets with complaints about bad shows and TV practices. Some groups of concerned viewers are even talking about boycotting certain shows or channels, if they continue to ignore the rising flurry of complaints.

Major initiative

One of the most impressively concerted group actions against irresponsible television has been mounted by Ka'malay'an

5,820 SIGNATURES/ A3-2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FUNNIER THAN "BRIDAL SHOWER"!
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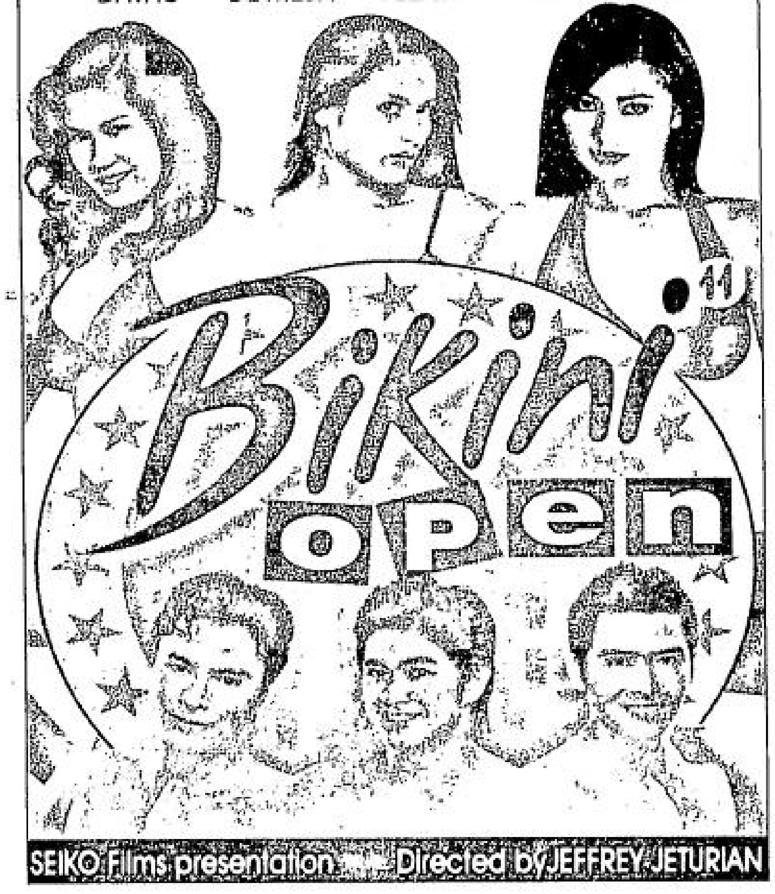
RAFAEL ROSELL ALFRED VARGAS J.E. SISON
guests RICKY DAVAO MICHAEL DE MESA RODEL VELAYO TIM YAP & MARISSA DELGADO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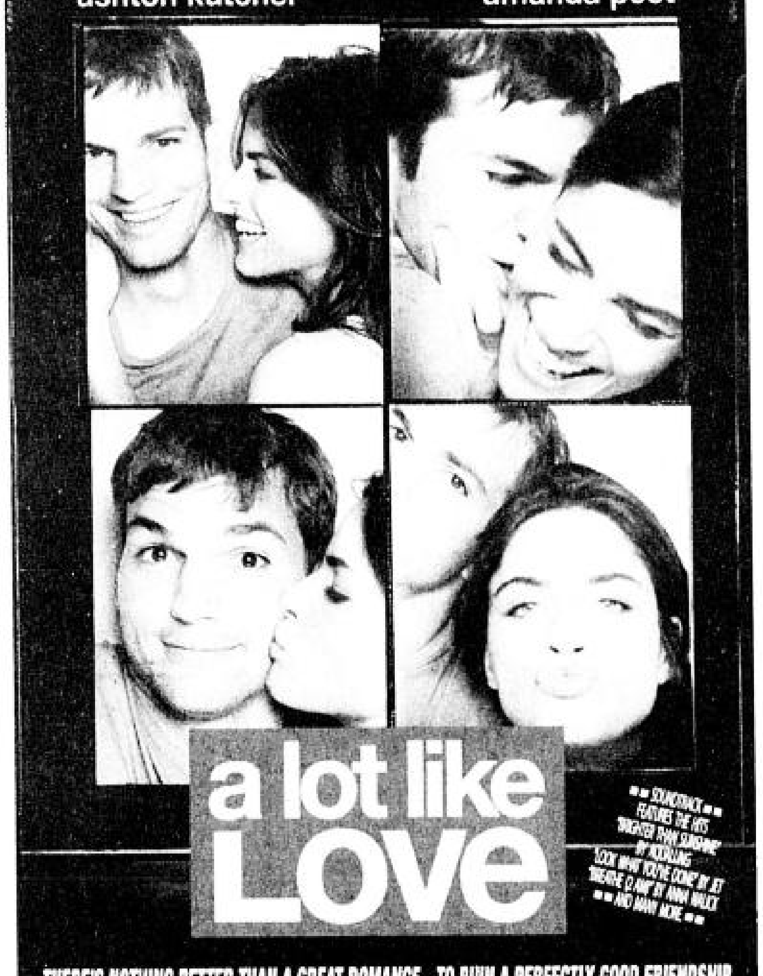
ashton kutcher amanda peet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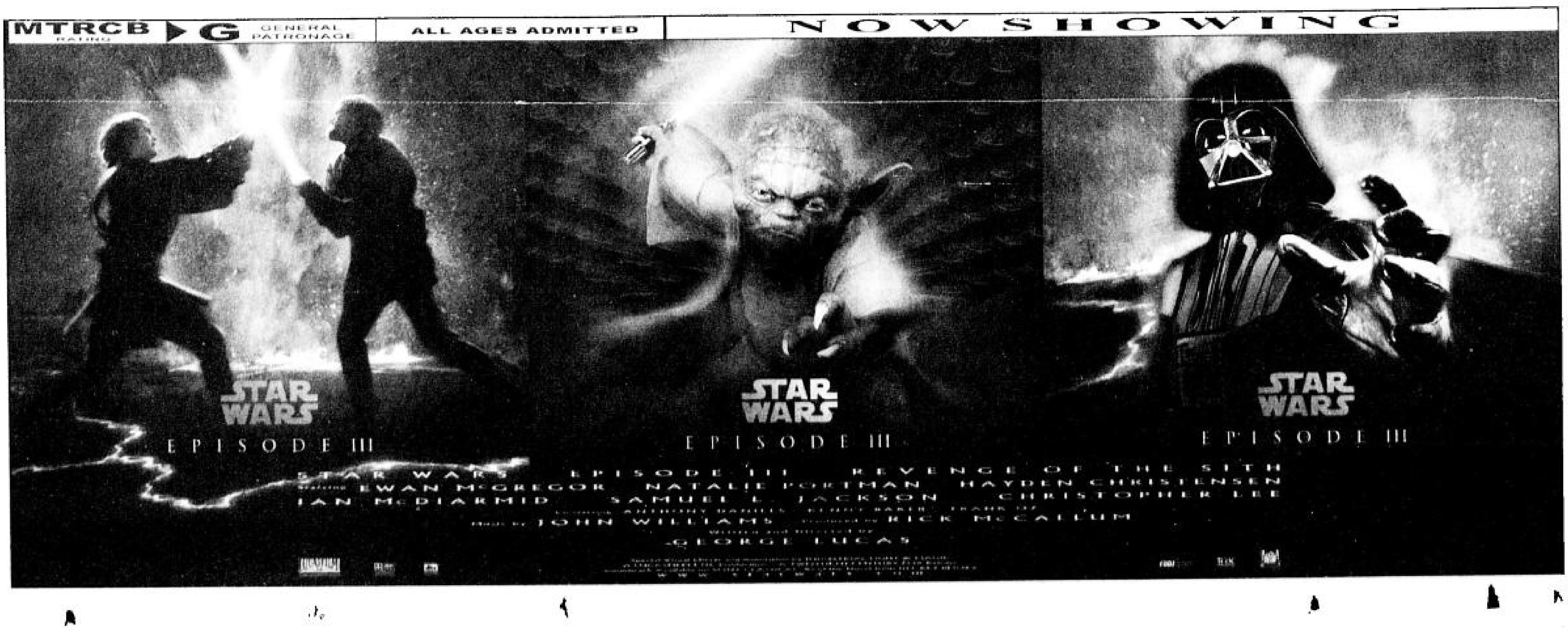
STAR WARS EPISODE III
STAR WARS EPISODE III
STAR WARS EPISODE III

STAR WARS EPISODE III REVENGE OF THE SITH
EWAN McGREGOR NATALIE PORTMAN HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN
IAN McDIARMID SAMUEL L. JACKSON CHRISTOPHER LEE
JOHN WILLIAMS RICK McCALLUM
GEORGE LUCAS

SATURDAY*Special*

PADILLA (left) plays *Pinoy* Everyman who's determined to get a US visa, no matter what it takes.

Robin Padilla turns in surprisingly focused performance

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN we talked to film writer-director Mark Meily some weeks ago, we learned that he was directing Robin Padilla in "La Visa Loca." Since we'd seen Robin ham it up in a number of movies and TV dramas, we told Mark that we "condoled" with him for having to direct such an obstreperous actor.

Instead of accepting our "condolence," however, Mark said he didn't have any problem working with Robin so he could come up with a good performance. Oh, really? We told ourselves that we would have to watch the finished film, to see for ourselves if the director wasn't damning his actor with faint praise.

Best

Well, we've just seen "La Visa Loca," and we must say that we agree with Meily that Robin has turned in a fine performance in their movie, perhaps his best to date.

All praise to Robin, of course, but Mark should receive his fair share of the plaudits.

We don't know what he did, but he somehow managed to eliminate Robin's usual hamminess and other bad acting habits, tics and shticks.

—Good for both of them! And, good for us viewers as well, because some of Robin's past characterizations were really very hard to take. This time, however, we won't have to "suffer"—and that's a great relief!

Part of the solution that Mark effected could have been his astute sense of casting. Robin is exactly right for his role in the movie, that of a sort of *Pinoy* Everyman who is determined to get a US visa by hook, crook or any other nefarious means, so that he can live a better life with his girlfriend in the States.

It's a dream that many disadvantaged Filipinos have, and the fact that Robin is popular with the *masa* makes him a good choice of actor to "represent" them.

Astute casting

But, astute casting alone can't explain Robin's considerable thespic achievement in "La Visa Loca." Director Meily has somehow succeeded in convincing his actor that, to come up with an effective portrayal, he doesn't have to beat his chest and scream melodramatic invectives to the moon, as he's wont to do.

This time, he plays it more naturally and likably, and that's *such* a relief. Robin does particularly well in his scenes with his sick but still ornery father (Johnny Delgado), and the young boy who could be his son.

These relationships encourage Robin to explore and reveal his more sensitive, vulnerable side, and it's such a pleasant discovery that he can be this simple and subtle.

So, has Robin totally banked his OA thespic fires? Not totally. There are some scenes in the movie that allow him to be as over-the-top as before—particularly the really funny sequence in which it becomes *his* turn to play an immigration officer and deny the visa applications of a long line of crestfallen foreigners!

This is the "hyper" Robin of old, but, cannily, cagily used to great effect by Mark Meily, who has succeeded in "reforming" Robin Padilla— precisely when he needs the rehabilitation most!

Ditsi Carolino wins best director prize

By Rica Arevalo

CAROLINO. Cops top award in docu festival in Prague.

DITSI Carolino recently received the best director award in the One World '05 Human Rights Documentary Film Festival in Prague, Czech Republic. Ditsi's "Bunso" (The Youngest) tackles juvenile justice centering on the lives of Tony, 13, Diosel, 11 and Tisoy *aka* Bunso,

DITSI/ A4-3

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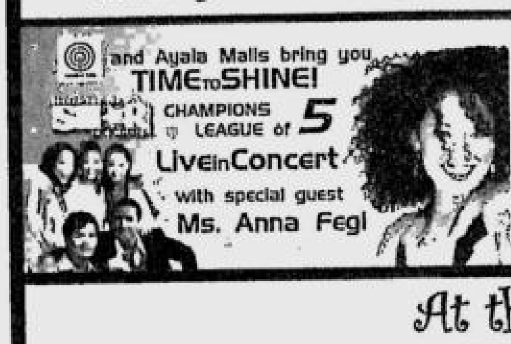
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AYALA CINEMAS THX

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	BIKINI OPEN			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	THX STAR WARS EP. 3 12:10, 3:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3
GB1 GREENBELT 1	STAR WARS EP. 3 12:30, 3:20, 6.10, 8:15	STAR WARS EP. 3 1:15, 4:05, 6:55,9:00					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX STAR WARS EP. 3 2:40, 5:30, 8:20, 11:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	THX STAR WARS EP. 3 2:10, 5:00, 7:50,10:40 GUARANTEED SEATS	STAR WARS EP. 3 1:40, 10:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	STAR WARS EP. 3 12:15, 3:05, 5:55, 8:45, 11:35 GUARANTEED SEATS	STAR WARS EP. 3 12:40, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10, 12:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	STAR WARS EP. 3	STAR WARS EP. 3	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	BIKINI OPEN			

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MTRCB Rating
General Audience (G)

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EPISODE III

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The film BIKINI OPEN is now showing at Ayala Cinemas

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Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324

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③ Bikini Open
④ Can This Be Love

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⑤ Star Wars Episode III
⑥ Star Wars Episode III
⑦ Star Wars Episode III

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GALLERIA 632-9116/16

1 STAR WARS Episode III • THX
11:50 2:40 5 30 8:20 10:50
2 STAR WARS Episode III
11:10 2:00 4:50 7:40 10:30
3 STAR WARS Episode III
1:00 3:50 6:40 9:30
4 BIKINI OPEN
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
5 STAR WARS Episode III
10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
6 XXX 2
12:00 2:10 4:20 6:30 8:45 10:00
7 AMITYVILLE HORROR
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
8 IN GOOD COMPANY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7.30 10:00
9 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
10 GUESS WHO?
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 STAR WARS Episode III
11:05 1:50 4:35 7:20 10:05
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:50
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
11.00 1:10 3:20 5.30 7:40 9:50
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
5 STAR WARS Episode III
11:55 2.40 5:25 8:10
6 BIKINI OPEN
10:30 12 50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
7 STAR WARS Episode III
10:20 1:05 3:50 6:35 9:20

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 9:00
3 BIKINI OPEN
10:25 1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05
4 STAR WARS Episode III
11:40 2:35 5:30 8:30
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:40 2:40 5:40 9:00
6 AMITYVILLE HORROR
10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
7 STAR WARS Episode III
10:40 1:35 4:30 7:25 10:30
8 STAR WARS Episode III
12:40 3:3 6:30 9:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 STAR WARS Episode III
11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25
3 BIKINI OPEN
11:15 1:45 4:15 6:45 9:00
4 AMITYVILLE HORROR
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30
5 STAR WARS Episode III
10:50 1:50 4:50 7:50
6 RESERVE
7 IN GOOD COMPANY
11:30 1:40 3:50 6:10 8:30
8 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 AMITYVILLE HORROR

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 SAMARA RING 2
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 STAR WARS Episode III
4 TAGOS SA LAMAN

CAINTA 240-4661

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 STAR WARS Episode III

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1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 THE INTERPRETER

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 THE PACIFIER
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 THE INTERPRETER

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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 STAR WARS Episode III
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 STAR WARS Episode III

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 THE INTERPRETER
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 STAR WARS Episode III

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 IN GOOD COMPANY

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 SIX
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 GUESS WHO
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 STAR WARS Episode III
6 STAR WARS Episode III

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 STAR WARS Episode III
4 SAHARA
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 THE INTERPRETER

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 THE INTERPRETER
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 STAR WARS Episode III
5 SAHARA
6 THE WEDDING DATE

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Ditsi Carolino wins best director prize

From page A4-1

11. She shares the award with Pirjo Honkasalo ("Three Rooms of Melancholia").

The best director was chosen by members of the grand jury: Don Edkins (Republic of South Africa), Nikolaus Geyrhalter (Austria), Anna Glogowski (France), Alena Müllerová (Czech Republic) and Anand Patwardhan (India).

Statement

In the festival website (http://www.oneworld.cz/ow/2005/), the statement of the Grand Jury says: "With the best director award, the jury wishes to honor two very different styles of documentary filmmaking, both addressing the situation of children caught up in conflict and inhumanity.

"In 'The Youngest,' the filmmaker achieves empathy and closeness to her characters, who are children held in atrocious conditions in a Manila jail. Filmed from not above or below their level, humor and despair intermingle as the children are allowed to speak for themselves as equals."

Ditsi was in Toronto for the Hot Docs filmfest, the biggest documentary festival in North America, when she got word of her win. At first, she was planning on skipping the One World filmfest because her next stop was Dokfest in Munich, Germany. But, the festival organizers wanted her to personally receive the prize.

She recalls, "When I learned about it, I cried. I couldn't believe it. I knew what my film was up against. I have this little film done on digital video, and I'm competing against documentaries with big budgets. What chance did I have?"

When "Bunso" had its world premiere at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), Honkasalo was referred to as the "great Finnish director." He even gave a master class in cinematography and directing there.

Audible gasp

Wherever Ditsi screens her film—be it in Amsterdam, Toronto, Prague or Munich—the audience always has the same reaction. Carolino shares, "First, they are shocked. At the end of the screening, there's always this audible gasp—and tears! Then, they ask how they can help the children."

She points out, "If members of Congress, or if the President can see the film, there is no need for debate. They *will* know what needs to be done! Problem is, they don't know what is happening."

Ditsi will be staying in New York for six months for an artist-in-residence program provided by the Asian Cultural Council. "It's a grant to explore your art," she explains. "I'm going to use this period to watch more documentaries. I want to learn more about marketing and distribution, not because I want to do it myself. I want to learn the best way to deal with distributors. *Ganyan naman ang buhay ng filmmaker—kahit na hirap*, you have to find a way to get distributors interested in your film. Two years ago, I realized that it's not enough for a filmmaker to make a movie, you have to be creative, you need to sell your film!"

"Bunso" will next be screened at the Silver Docs filmfest in Washington DC, USA from June 14 to 19.

CAROLINO receives her trophy.

Yummy midnight snack

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

I HAD just come back from Shanghai and was reminiscing about the great dinners and superb shopping we experienced. I was a bit worried because it is trips like these that push standards a notch higher, and only a comparably good meal will truly satisfy.

We had just ended the evening at Katre and were about to head home when Danny Dingkong suggested we have a midnight snack at Spring Deer restaurant along Timog in Quezon City.

Sweet and delicious

As soon as you enter the restaurant, you are greeted by a wall of aquariums with live seafood. We started off with steamed shrimps with a nice light soy sauce and shredded veggies on the side. Dipped in the sauce, the shrimps were slightly sweet and delicious!

Danny insisted I try *alupihang dagat* or mantis shrimp. It looked like a huge centipede. It was cut up, coated with flour, and deep-fried. It was then tossed in salt, chili and garlic. Perfect! The meat was tender and moist, the texture a cross between crab and lobster. A must!

Filling

The other dish we had was shredded beef with carrots. This filling, you stuff into an *ampao*-like bread covered with sesame seeds—and dance with joy! The dish is uniquely appealing in taste and appearance. You can also have a chicken version.

This midnight meal was a wonderful discovery of new dishes! What a great transition from the food of Shanghai.

Happy eating!

(Hong Kong Spring Deer restaurant is at 31 Timog ave. corner Scout Tobias, between the rotunda and Quezon blvd. Call 371-4358 and 374-3582.)

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   2nd Prize (5 winners) : 1 Powerpuff Girls Carnival Set each
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5. Raffle draw is on August 10, 2005.

See posters for details.

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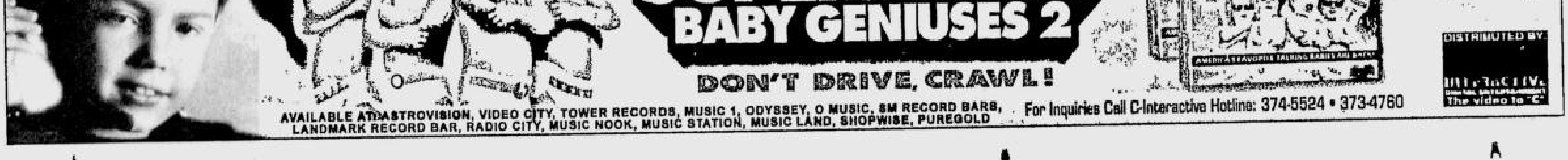
Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0514 Series of 2005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Variety and vitality in NU 107's rock compilation

NU 107
SUPER SIZE ROCK

ALBUM fuses old and new sounds of the genre.

By Noelani Torre

WE wouldn't call what's been happening in the local rock scene a renaissance, but recently, you may have noticed that there's been a higher than usual level of vitality. We've been hearing more new bands, while the more established ones have been releasing new material, and some groups have broken away from major labels to explore newer ground with the indies.

NU 107.5 FM gives us a glimpse of all this via "Super Size Rock," a 15-track compilation produced with Warner Music. The CD's playlist is a pretty comprehensive representation of rock's biggest acts—from Rivermaya to Urbandub and Barbie's Cradle.

Zest

Album opener is Sponge Cola's oft-heard "KLSP" (Kulang Lang Sa Pansin). They're the youngest group here, though most of the bands included are pretty young, and they've imbued their single with all the zest and energy of youth.

No less forceful, though not quite as young, is The Dawn with "Tulad ng Dati," a track that sounds classic and fresh at the same time. Meanwhile, the ever-popular Rivermaya's "Ambulansya" tells us that they're still a band to be reckoned with, even sans the presence of a certain former member, whose own self-titled group is not included in this list.

There are a couple of women rockers here, as well—a still not-so-common commodity even in this day and age. Former Mojofly vocalist Kitchie Nadal heads the list with "Bulong," one of the songs in her recently-released solo debut that's been enjoying heavy airplay for some months now. Barbie's Cradle is still going strong with "Pag-ibig," and newcomer Juana shows a lot of pop-rock promise in "Pansinin Mo."

Contract

"Older" groups in the album include Radioactive Sago Project, Kamikazee and Sandwich—all of whom differ wildly from one another. RSP defies categorization with their spoken-word stream-of-consciousness song, "Nalulunod sa Isang Basong Tubig," while Kamikazee's "Girlfriend" is bright, charming, and a contrast to Sandwich's bass-heavy "Right Now."

Newer groups, some of which haven't hit the mainstream yet, include Cebu-based Urbandub ("Under Crisis"), Ciudad ("Monica"), Velcro ("Collide"), Orange and Lemons ("Kailangan Kita"), and Fil-Am imports, The Speaks ("Life's a Joke").

In case you haven't been paying attention to local rock recently, this collection makes for a good introduction, and there's enough variety to please everybody. What's more, it is reasonably priced—so, you get your money's worth!

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REVENGE OF THE SITH

SCHEDULES OF STAR WARS EPISODE 3 ON MAY 19 (THURSDAY)

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Cinema 1 - 10:40 am, 1:30 pm, 4:20, 10:00
Cinema 2 - 11:10 am, 2:00 pm. 4:50, 7:40, 10:30
Cinema 3 - 11:40 am, 2:30 pm, 5:20, 8:10, 11:00
Cinema 4 - 1:00 pm, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30
Cinema 5 - 12:30 pm, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
Cinema 2 - 1:00 pm, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
Cinema 3 - 10:30 am, 1:30 pm, 4:30, 7:30,10:30

GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 1 - 12:40 pm, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10
Cinema 2 - 11:45 am, 2:35 pm, 5:25, 8:15, 11:05
Cinema 3 - 12:10 pm, 3:00, 11:30
Cinema 6 - 1:40 pm, 4:30, 10:10
Cinema 7 - 1:10 pm, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40

GREENBELT 1
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:20, 6:10, 8:15
Cinema 2 - 1:15 pm, 4:05, 6:55, 9:00

GREENBELT 3
Cinema 1 - 1:40 pm, 4:30, 10:10
Cinema 2 - 2:10 pm, 5:00, 10:40
Cinema 3 - 1:10 pm, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40, 12:30
Cinema 4 - 12:40 pm, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10, 12:00
Cinema 5 - 12:15 pm, 3:05, 5:55, 11:35

MARKET! MARKET!
Cinema 5 - 12:20 pm, 3:10, 6:00, 8:50
Cinema 6 - 12:50 pm, 3:40, 6:30, 9:20
Cinema 7 - 1:20 pm, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:10
Cinema 2 - 1:30 pm, 3:50, 9:30

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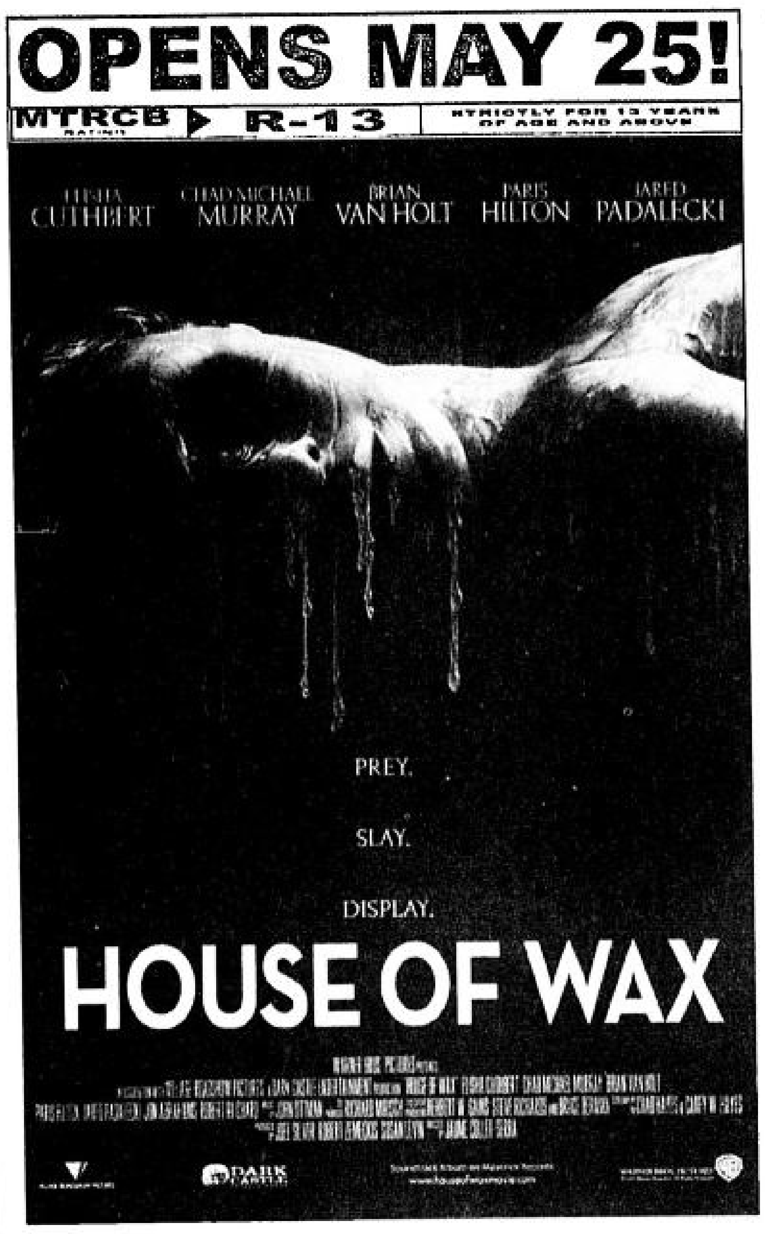
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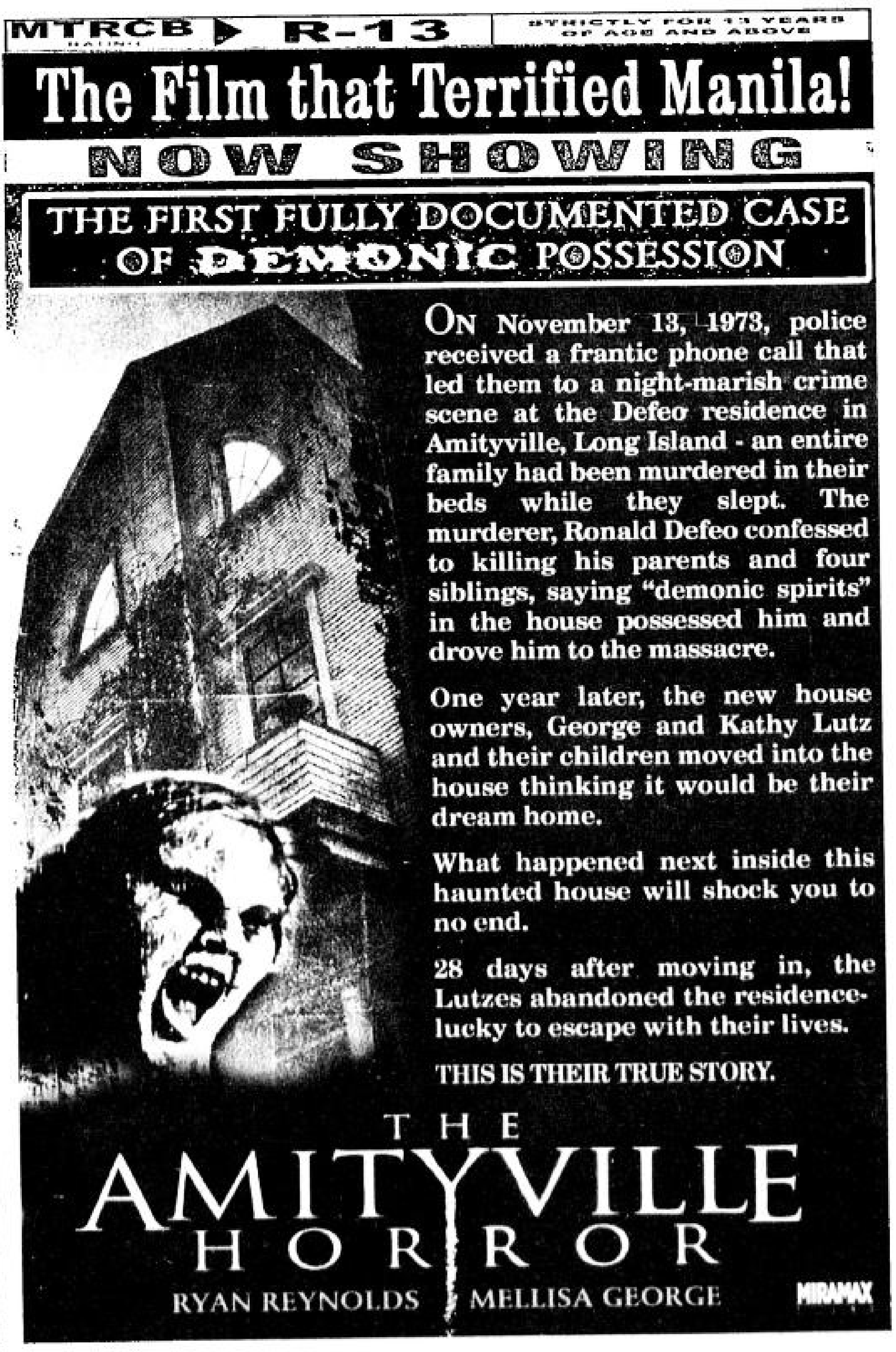
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Q2 trade outlook not too rosy, says BSP

By Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESS confidence slumped in the second quarter over worries on runaway oil prices, the pending hike in the value added tax and a slowdown in global trade, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

In the latest BSP quarterly business expectations survey (BES), the deterioration in business outlook makes it for the third consecutive quarter since the closing months of 2004, with skyrocketing oil prices identified as the biggest cause of concern.

"Higher oil prices have upset all types of projection and business plans," Diwa Guinigundo, BSP assistant governor, yesterday said. "Nobody anticipated that oil price will shoot up beyond $50 per barrel at the beginning of 2004. When it became very expensive, and was combined with the weakening peso-dollar exchange rate, that brought havoc to business plans of industries."

Guinigundo yesterday presented the second quarter BES, which indicated a decline in the overall business outlook diffusion index (DI) to 12.9 percent from 17.6 percent in the first quarter survey.

The DI refers to the percentage share of firms that answered in the affirmative, less those that gave negative responses, in a given indicator.

A positive DI indicates a favorable view when measuring confidence levels.

The business outlook for the third quarter of 2005 is likewise less optimistic, based on the diffusion index of 22.3 percent as opposed to the 34.2 percent of the previous survey.

The latest BSP survey was conducted from April 11 until May 6, the day before the Congress bicameral conference committee passed the VAT reform package.

"The general picture is that optimism is lower but business outlook remains positive," Guinigundo said.

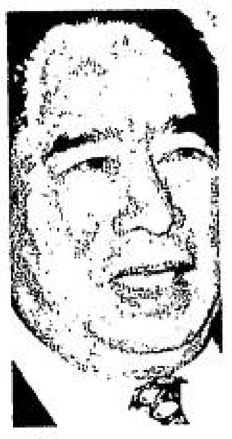
As to the business expectations for the current quarter, respondents from the National Capital Region were less optimistic than those outside the NCR.

Guinigundo said the impending VAT reforms—which mandated an adjustment in the rate to 12 percent from the current 10 percent while certain exemptions were removed—created a cloud of uncertainty among businessmen.

"This means they have to allot additional money to pay," Guinigundo said. "But of course, from the perspective of

Q2 TRADE/ B6

WHAT'S INSIDE



SY

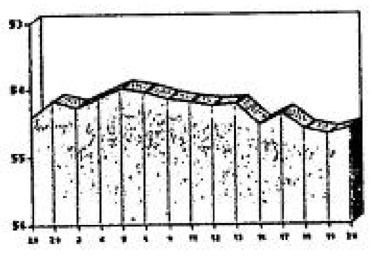
GOKONGWEI

- **Sy-Gokongwei bidding war looms** /B3
- **Call of the wired** BREAKTIME/B2
- **Probe of 'Manila' mangoes in Mexico** /B7

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 54.575 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., May 20, 2005

¥ 107.51 = $ 1

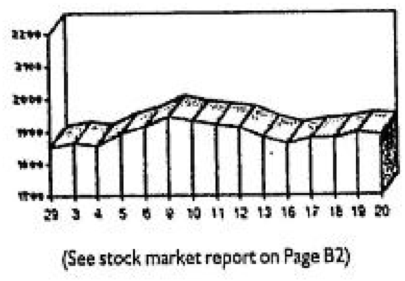
As of 5 p.m., May 20, 2005

GOLD: $422.00-422.50

per ounce Hong Kong, May 19, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks end 0.3 percent lower

SHARES closed lower yesterday—led by Ayala Land, JG Summit and SM Prime—as fears over corporate earnings mount, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index closed down 6.36 points, or 0.3 percent, at 1,886.73, after rising 1.6 percent in the past three sessions, including Thursday's 0.7 percent gain.

Ayala Land fell 5.3 percent to P7.20 , while JG Summit lost 5.9 percent to P3.20. SM Prime was off 1.3 percent at P7.50.

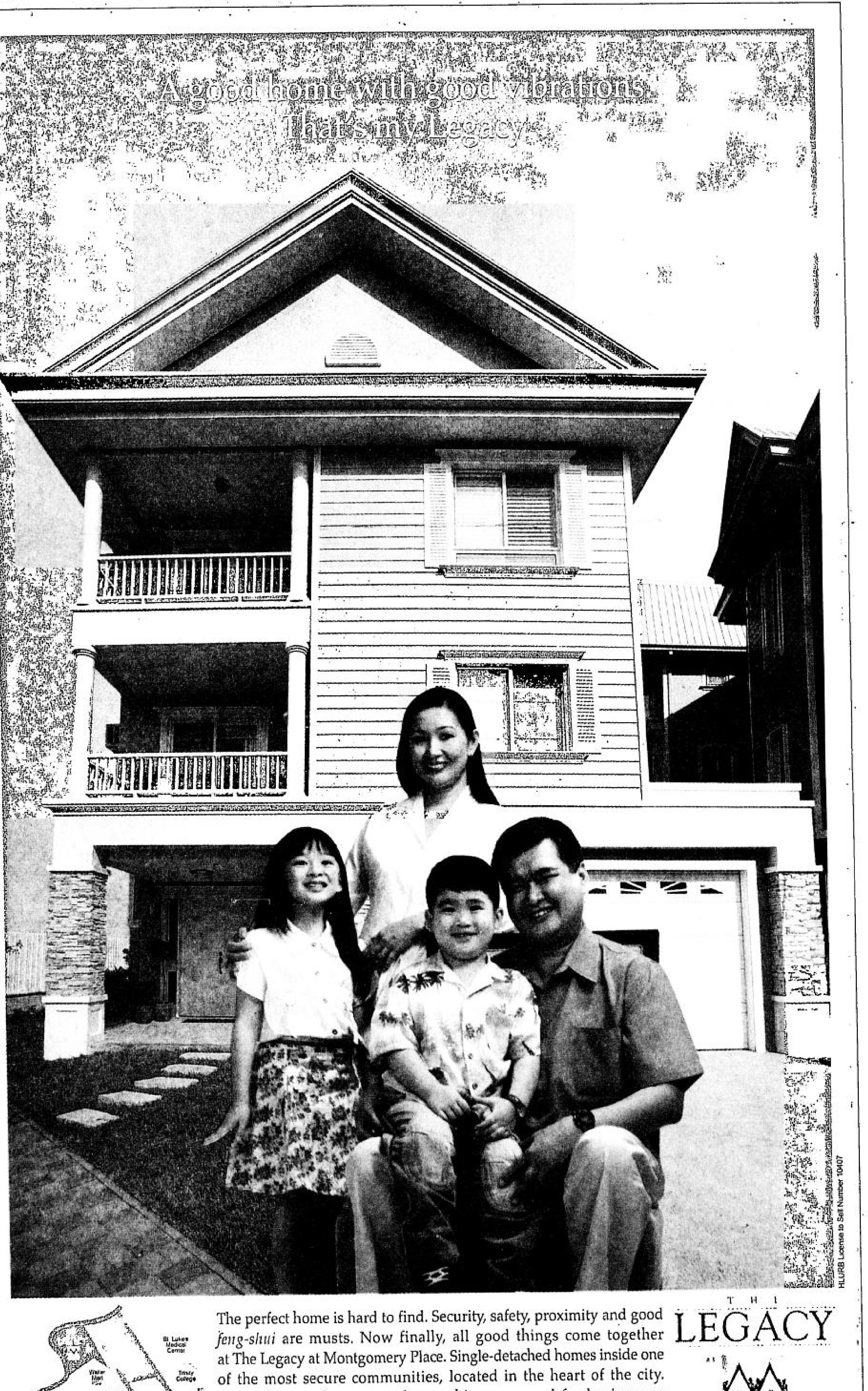
"The main concern now for the market is the quality of second-quarter corporate earnings," said DA Market Securities President Nestor Aguila. "With the new round of taxes, the question is which company can hold its fort and which one will have to adjust."

Last week, Congress ratified long delayed amendments to the value added tax, which form the centerpiece of the government's fiscal reform program. One of the amendments raises the corporate income tax to 35 percent from 32 percent starting next year, before it is lowered to 30 percent in 2009.

While the amendments are expected to generate additional revenue for the government, analysts are concerned about their impact on corporate finances.

Such concerns outweighed Thursday's news that the government posted a P3.3-billion budget surplus in April, its first in four years.

Equitable PCI rose 2.1 percent to P48 following a disclosure from Banco de Oro yesterday that it offered to buy EBC Investments Inc.'s stake in Equitable PCI, estimated at 10.80 percent. *AP*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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

OUR brilliant guys at the DST, the Department of Science and Technology, will be happy to know that I can now use the computer to gain some basic knowledge, such as the vital statistics of super models.

Now, wait a minute! What I am only trying to say is that there is more to this thing called “computer literacy” than just knowing how to use the mouse—the digital kind, okay, and not the jueteng protector.

Really, in other places of the world, the computer is more than just a tool for cooking up the financial books of our friend who is trying to hide things from BIR Commissioner Willie Parayno.

In this day and age, people also use the computer to learn new skills and gain more knowledge.

You know—facts and figures on history, science or the betting odds in Las Vegas.

I use the computer, for instance, to analyze the physics in the movement of the ball in this science program called “Pinball.”

In our country, anyway, we are still far from such a state, even considering that, under this cute administration of Gloriaetta, our government is trumpeting ICT, meaning, “information communication technology,” as the source of new jobs.

Look, we don't even have a software-making industry.

* * *

YET, we have all the factors for any country to do well in the software making business, according to Ken Wye Saw, the top man here in Southeast Asia of the world's biggest software company, called Microsoft.

Ken notes that we, Filipinos, have a good command of the English language, which is in fact the ICT language. He also says that we are also quite creative.

Well, maybe Ken already learned about some Filipino innovation such as Pusoy Dos and Tong-its.

But really now, why do we not have a software-making industry? To Ken, the main reason is, simply, the lack of opportunity.

Not many people here are making money in, for instance, doing the computer programming for business.

That, among the techies, is known as “business solutions.” It is a specialized line of software making, something in which even the giant Microsoft has no clear advantage over the small guys, and so it is a wide-open field for the locals.

Ken admits, in this “business solutions,” Microsoft is not even the world's dominant player, not like in operating systems or in application programs.

Here in the Philippines, Microsoft is still waging a guerrilla war in that line.

And Microsoft is doing it through partnerships with local software companies. I thought it should be a good starting point for coming up with the “opportunity” for our fledgling software making businesses. Look, Microsoft is behind them!

* * *

AS a matter of fact, the guys in the local Microsoft outfit told me about such a partnership with a local group called “Gurango,” which was put up by a young brilliant IT profession—a Pinoy!

In the partnership, Ken says that Microsoft gets only $1 out of every $8 of the revenue. Is it out of charity? Well, Microsoft can actually earn more in the future by selling some more off-the-shelf software to the same client.

In effect, therefore, Microsoft provides the software, while Gurango does the programming, tailor-made for a particular client.

Well, the PBA lucky-ending operation, for instance!

* * *

I JUST thought, maybe, that it is the kind of ICT business in which Filipinos can do well. You see, a few years ago, I wrote about a group of Filipino programmers who were hired by a Japanese software company, straight from school.

They were just new, inexperienced graduates from local computer schools at that time. The Japanese company still invested in them, first, by bringing them to Japan, and then, by teaching them the Japanese language Nihongo—in the hard-to-learn Chinese characters.

Guess what—after several months, they could already do computer programming in Nihongo. That good!

And so they were brought back to Manila to do computer programming in a foreign language to receive local salary rates.

Still, they earned more than any of us who slaved, and still slave, day and night over the computer. Joke only, boss!

* * *

ANYWAY, the statistics on our computer usage can be frightening, if you consider that the world is fast becoming “wired,” which is not a term for the “metal braces” on your teeth, but a techie reference to “computerization.”

Out of 80 million Filipinos in this country (the others are abroad, or some 10 million of them, either officially or whatever), it is estimated that only two million are computer users.

In comparison, we have something like 20 to 25 million users of cellular phones. And what do we use them for? “Texting” jokes about Jose Pidal and Gloriaetta.

I'll tell you what. Cellular telephones even cost more than a computer.

My son who now works for a foreign bank, actually uses a P30,000 cellular telephone. I assembled my computer for much, much less than that amount. So who said life was fair?

* * *

LOOK at that—we have only two million computer users, as against OFWs of about 8 to 9 million, based on our official estimates.

It seems that the families here of those OFWs spend a lot on SMS instead.

That's why I think that Microsoft has something in its drive for OFWs to start using the Internet. You know—e-mail and chat and all that!

The local Microsoft unit actually started to organize the OFWs in Malaysia and Singapore to teach them basic computer skills.

The Microsoft guys even said that the teachers were mostly volunteer “expats” in those places.

Well, a lot of the OFWs in Malaysia and Singapore work as a yaya, for the kids of those expats. I guess they really need to know all about computers. Those kids go the Internet to “chat,” meaning, to communicate with somebody, and they give out information that can endanger the lives of their families.

Terrorists use the Internet, too.

* * *

IN hi-tech lingo, that program of Microsoft is part of “digital inclusion.” (I don't really know where they get such terms, but I suppose they were not lifted from some dead language in the North Pole or something.)

I also found out that Microsoft is investing in the computer training of public school teachers—some 50,000 of them, for starters.

That's only on how to operate the computer, some basic skills. Who knows? When our public school teachers finally learn how to use computers, they may learn how to do research through the Internet.

Recently, for instance, I went to the Bagbag National High School in Barangay Bagbag, Rosario, Cavite.

One teacher told me that, indeed, the school was lucky enough to have some computers. But that's it.

Unfortunately, the school uses them only to teach the students how to run basic applications.

Don't they have DVDs on Philippine history, for instance, or on the works of our national artists, or on carpentry? Well, nothing! So how do we expect our students even to know the vital statistics of supermodels?

LBP's loans in the first quarter benefited close to 75,000 farmers and fisherfolk nationwide.

PDI PHOTO

LBP loans to farmers, fisherfolk up

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE LAND BANK of the Philippines increased its loans to small farmers and fisher folk by 27 percent in the first quarter this year to around P3.5 billion, from P2.7 billion in the same period last year.

LBP president and CEO Gary B. Teves said that the loans benefited close to 75,000 farmers and fisherfolk nationwide, and was channeled through almost 450 cooperatives, 226 countryside financial institutions and Quedancor.

“Our continued financial and technical support to the country's small farmers and fisherfolk reflects our commitment to this priority sector, as well as President Macapagal Arroyo's 10-point development agenda,” Teves said.

Farmers and fisherfolk in Luzon received the largest share at P2 billion.

Other than loans made to farmers and fisherfolk, LBP's loans to its priority sectors, including the small and medium enterprises and local government units, micro-enterprises, agribusiness, livelihood and environment-related projects also went up by 13 percent to P74 billion from P66 billion within the period, Teves said.

“Our priority sectors represents 69 percent of the bank's total loan portfolio as of March now amounting to P107 billion,” he added.

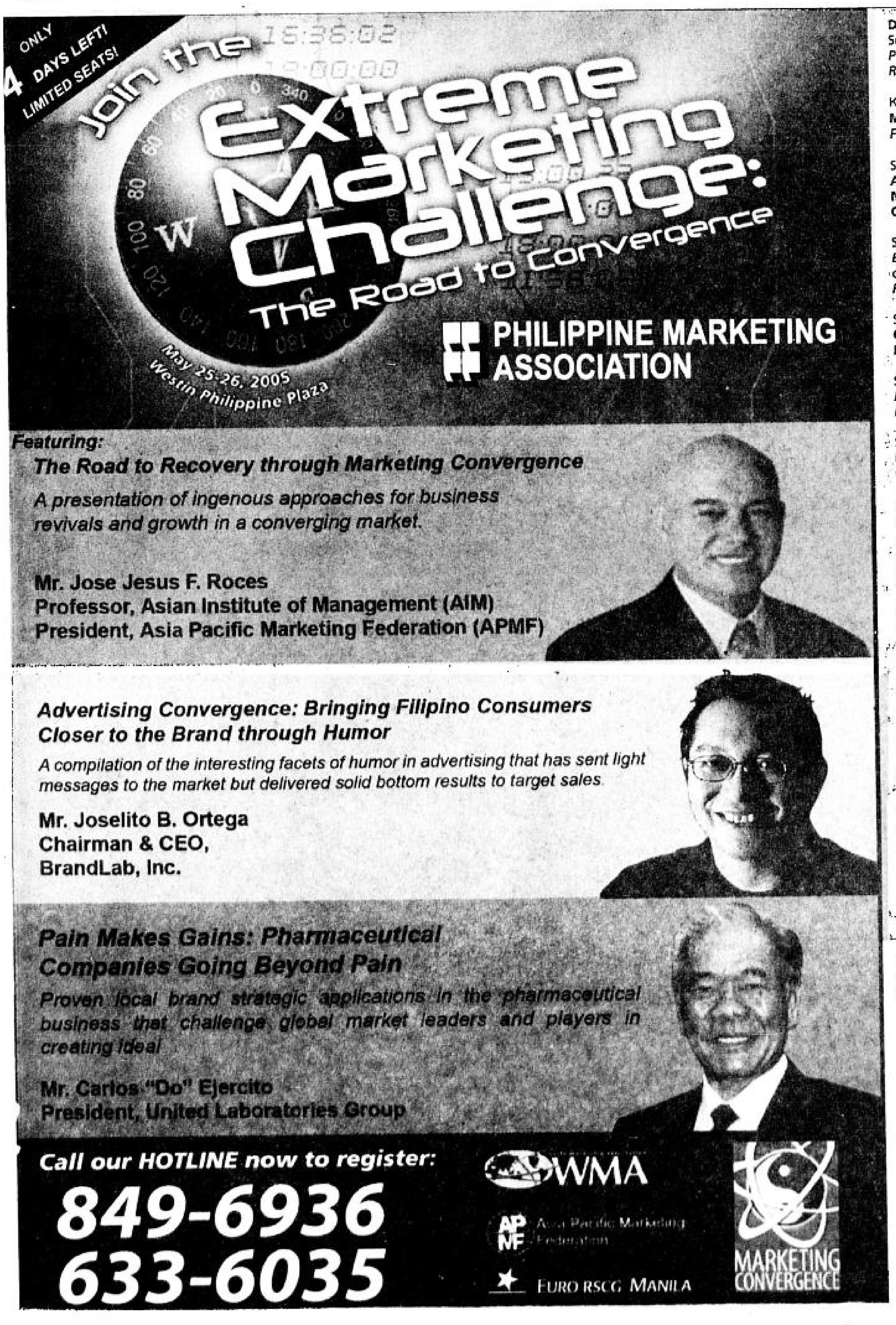
The Land Bank recently waived the 2 percent supervision fee for Landbank-accredited key cooperatives, as part of its continued support for the cooperative sector.

Key cooperatives are municipal-level lead co-ops that meet Landbank's accreditation criteria for Class A or B co-ops.

These criteria include a proven track records, 100 percent repayment with Landbank and complete and computerized books of accounting.

Landbank has so far accredited 111 key cooperatives nationwide.

“We want to target at least one key co-op in every municipality to become Landbank's valued development partner in reaching out to the small farmers and fisherfolk in the area,” Teves said.



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Keynote Address
Mr. Robert de Ocampo
President, Asian Institute of Marketing

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A Business Philosophy for Extreme Marketing: Pushing Your Limits in a Crisis Economy
Speaker: Mr. Bienvenido Policarpio
Executive Vice President, Prudential Group of Companies
President, Dale Carnegie Philippines

Session Two:
Customer Relationship Management: Building Technology to the Extreme
Speaker: Mr. Mark Yambot
Director for Corporate Affairs, Microsoft Philippines, Inc.

Session Three:
Pain Makes Gains: Pharmaceutical Companies Going Beyond Pain
Speaker: Mr. Carlos "Do" Ejercito
President, United Laboratories Group

Session Four:
The New Empire: Shaping the Future of High-Rise Condominiums
Speaker: Mr. Luke Tan
Director, Investor Relation, Megaworld

Session Five:
Challenging Global Brands through Sports Marketing Events
Speaker: Mr. Christophe Bezu
Senior Vice President, Adidas-Salomon AG, Hong Kong

For full programme schedule and other details:
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Telefax: 636-1451; 634-5722 (ATTN: ROSE SANTOS)
Cell. 0916-714-1713
Email: sarahpv@pldtdsl.net
pma@philonline.com

Day 2 : May 26, 2005
Session Chair: Dr. Karen De Asis
Marketing Consultant
Marketing Director, La Salle Graduate School

Session Six:
Mega Formulas for Extreme Marketing from a Marketing Guru
Speaker: Mr. Hermawan Kartajaya
President & Leading Service Officer, MarkPlus&Co.

Session Seven:
Advertising Convergence: Bringing Filipino Consumers Closer to the Brand through Humor
Speaker: Mr. Joselito B. Ortega
Chairman & CEO, BrandLab, Inc.

Session Eight:
The New Imperative in Today's Convergence in Marketing: Sustainable Growth
Speaker: Mr. Gavin Coombes
Vice President, Euro-RSCG Asia Pacific

Session Nine:
Mall Mania: Shop Until You Drop!
Speaker: Ms. Grace F. Magno
Head of Marketing, Araneta Group of Companies

Session Ten:
New Rules in Market Leadership: Success Stories in Non-traditional Bank Marketing
Speaker: Mr. Tomas Victor Mendoza
SAVP, Banco de Oro Universal Bank

Session Eleven:
Creativity on the Edge: Media & Marketing Convergence
Speaker: Mr. Nicanor C. Gubunada
Senior Vice President for Integrated Sales & Marketing, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Company

Closing Session:
The Road to Recovery through Market Convergence
Speaker: Mr. Jose Jesus F. Roces
Professor, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)
President, Asia Pacific Marketing Federation (APMF)

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BDO seen launching new takeover bid for EPCIB

By Doris C. Dumlao

RETAIL magnate Henry Sy was seen launching another bid to take over control of Equitable PCI Bank after it offered to buy the 10.73 million shares held by investment house EBC Investments Inc.

Elmer Serrano, BDO corporate information officer, told the Philippine Stock Exchange that the bank—on its behalf and of other unnamed parties—had formally offered to pay in cash for all the EPCIBank shares owned and held by the investment house.

"BDO has offered to pay the higher price of P43.50 per share or up to a 10 percent premium over the weighted average share price of EPCIBank common shares as sold over the PSE over a period to be mutually agreed upon," Serrano said.

Banking sources said, however, that BDO has likewise offered to buy EPCIB shares held by other investors and lodged at the Philippine Central Depository Inc.

If combined with EBC's shares, the total offer would cover as much as 10 percent of EPCIB shares.

The price offered to EBC Investments was the same price BDO quoted for the shares held by the Social Security System before the deal was blocked by a case filed by the Philippine Association of Retired Persons, which insisted that the pension fund should have conducted a public bidding for the shares.

Analysts said BDO's latest offer marked the start of a new bidding war for control of EPCIBank amid market talks that the Go family, EPCIB's founding stockholder, was keen on enlisting the financial support of tycoon John Gokongwei to foil the SM group's hostile takeover bid.

SY

GOKONGWEI

BDO, now the country's seventh biggest bank, earlier forged a deal to buy out the single biggest stake of 29 percent held by SSS in EPCIBank.

If the deal was not stopped by the Makati court, the Sy family would have become the single biggest stockholder in EPCIBank, followed by the Go family with 24 percent interest, and the Government Service Insurance System, with about 10 percent.

The offer to buy out the stake held by EBC Investments indicated Sy's continued strong interest in EPCIBank, even while the SSS deal was still pending for resolution at the Makati Regional Trial Court, analysts said.

Joseph Roxas, a stock analyst and president of Eagle Equities Inc. said: "If they get it, it's really a foot in the door for the SM group as they already own around 2.5 percent stake in EPCIBank on top of shares still in the Philippine Central Depository."

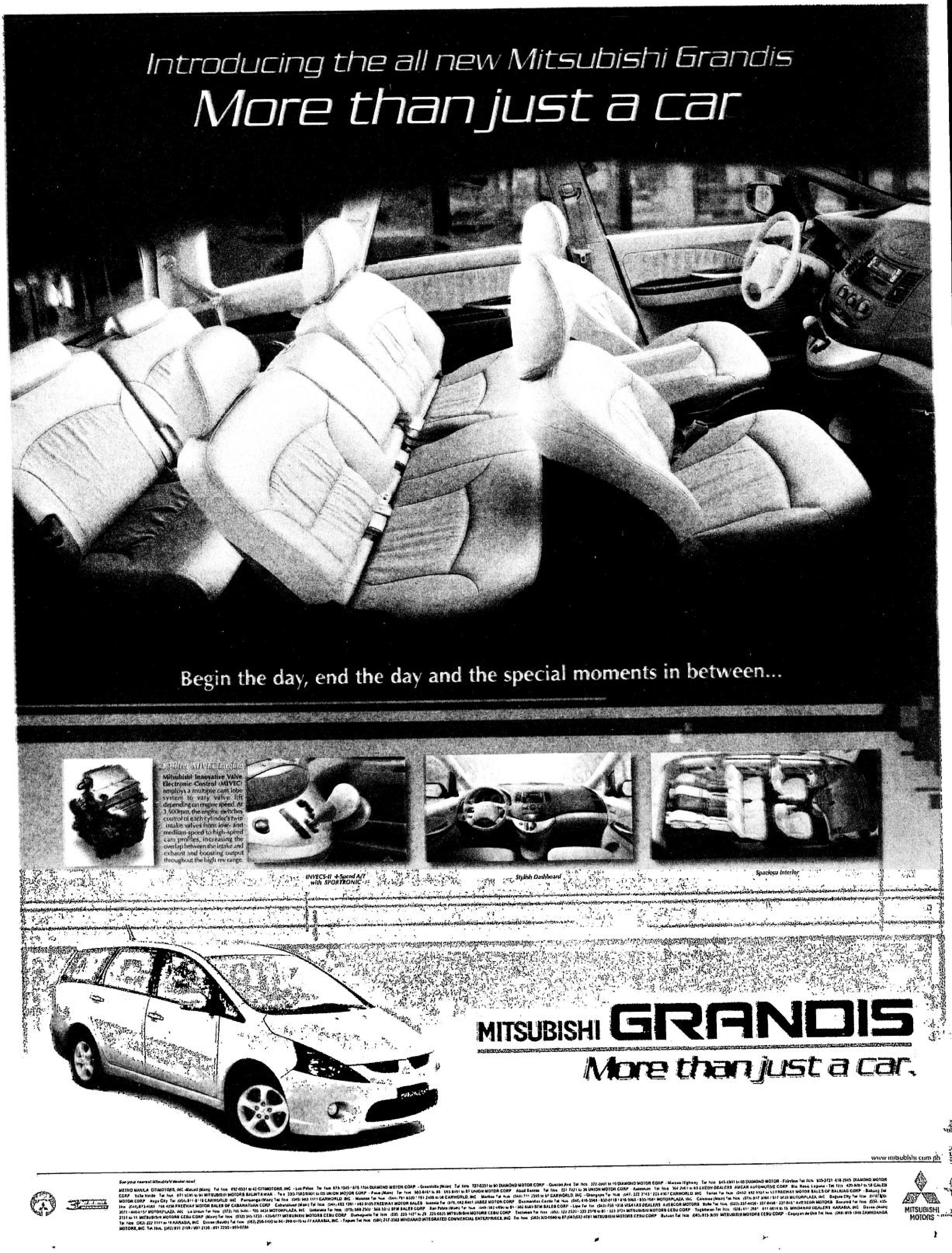
Citing PSE records on beneficial ownership, Roxas said Sy's retail arm, Shoemart Inc., already owns 6.1 million shares or 0.84 percent, while SM Development Corp. holds another 400,000 shares.

The Go and Gokongwei families denied they were forging an alliance, but banking sources said there was indeed a share-swap deal being negotiated that seeks to fold in Gokongweis' Robinsons Savings Bank into Equitable PCI, thereby paving the way for Gokongwei's return to the bank.

Gokongwei, along with the Lopez group, used to be the biggest stockholder of PCI Bank before their combined stake was sold to Equitable Bank in 1999.

BDO aims to rapidly expand its banking business by acquiring the operation and branches of other banks.

BDO has a nationwide network of 184 branches and 327 automated teller machines.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Pooh's Heffalump Movie exclusively at SM Cinema

KIDS will have the rare opportunity to watch a movie about one of their best loved characters as Walt Disney/Toons studios present Pooh's Heffalump Movie in exclusive screenings at the SM Cinemas.

In this new movie adventure, Pooh and the gang are back, and something mysterious is haunting Hundred Acre Woods and its inhabitants. Awakened by a rumbling that could only be made possible by the ever-feared Heffalumps - terrifying creatures they have never seen, the whole gang led by Rabbit, sets forth in a journey to invade Heffalump Hallow to scare the dreaded creatures away.

Little Roo, who's told he's too young to join in the very dangerous expedition, starts his very own search with far greater success than his friends, Roo follows the Heffalump footprints and meets the young and playful Heffridge Trumpler Brompet Heffalump III or Lumpy. Lumpy's just a little guy who likes to play, and the two strike up a friendship and work together to dispel the unfounded fears of their respective families and friends.

Drawing inspiration from the 1926 literary creation by AA Milne, Pooh's Heffalump Movie is the third original Pooh feature ever created for the big screen. Milne's Pooh books, which have sold more than 50 million copies and have translated in at least 31 languages, continue to be a favorite read in the techie age the world over.

Director Frank Nissen (Treasure Planet and Dinosaur) says, "The wonderful thing about the Pooh property is that it is full of rich characters and wonderful emotions." The filmmakers were delighted to have the opportunity to bring a new character into the world of Pooh, as the movie unveils a new character in Lumpy. He's a sweet, rolly polly bundle of energy with a giggle as infectious as his playful spirit, who in the end saves Roo from trouble.

What is a Heffalump? According to Walt Disney Feature Animation president David Stainton, "the Heffalump character is AA Milne's way of visualizing our innermost nightmares and the all common tendency that we all have to fear what we don't know."

Pooh and his pals have never seen the mythical evil creature, but they still are very much afraid. The filmmakers had a lot of fun showing the Hundred Acre Woods characters come to grips with the unknown as they encounter this strange new creature. There's a great message to be learned that taking the time to get to know someone can help erase fears.

Watching Pooh's Heffalump makes it clear why Pooh and his friends have withstood the test of time and continue to remain in the hearts of children and adults everywhere. "They really care about each other, and they're really good friends deep down. I think that's a message that people always love to be around," says Frank Nissen.

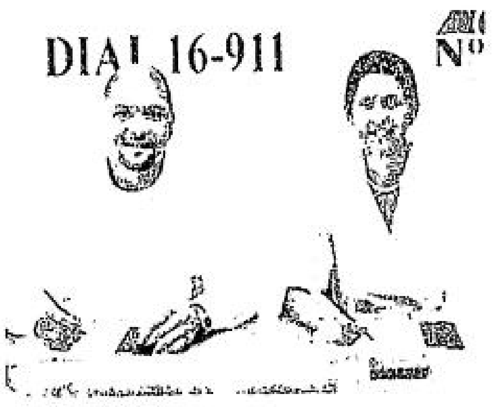
In this film, Pooh, Roo, Tigger, Eeyore, Rabbit, Piglet and Lumpy convey another universal message - that once we learn about different creatures, we realize they are not very scary at all and that we are all the same. Says Nikita Hopkins (Roo's voice), "the movie is about overcoming prejudice and how people are just exactly the same if you think about it. Everyone's not so different."

Catch Pooh' Heffalump Movie exclusively on one day runs at the SM Cinemas: May 25 at SM City Fairview; June 1 at SM City North Edsa and June 8 at SM Southmall.

THE GANG from the Hundred Acre Wood is back in Walt Disney's latest animation feature, 'Pooh's Heffalump Movie' exclusively showing at SM Cinemas.

DSAP ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD OFFICERS, MEMBERS

The Direct Selling Association of the Philippines (DSAP) recently elected its new set of board officers and members for 2005. DSAP is the organization of 26 member companies engaged in the business of direct selling and network marketing nationwide. It is a member of the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations with affiliate associations in over 50 countries worldwide. Photo shows (seated from left): Nice Cruz, director of operations of GNLD International and DSAP treasurer; Naty Golez, managing director of Forever Living Products Phils; Ina Quiogue, general manager of Avon Cosmetics Inc and DSAP vice chair; (standing from left): Bernie Mercado, general manager of Mary Kay Phils Inc; lawyer Jolly Gomez, managing director of Reliv Phils Inc; Joey Sarmiento, country manager of Sunrider Phils Inc and DSAP chair; Gary Juang, general manager of Herbalife (Phils) Inc; Ricky Sy, general manager of Sara Lee Direct Selling and Jose De Jesus Buenrostro, president and managing director of Tupperware Phils Inc.



NORTHGATE CYBERZONE TAPS LIFELINE ARROWS

Northgate Cyberzone, the first Peza-registered information technology park in the South, recently signed an agreement with Lifeline Arrows Medical Specialist Inc, making the latter the exclusive Emergency Medical Provider of the IT Park. Lifeline Arrows will provide 24-hour emergency and ambulatory services to all tenants, employees and staff of the companies within the park. Present during the signing were Maitel Miñana, Filinvest Alabang Inc vice president for business development IT and Michael Deakin, Lifeline Arrows president and CEO.

NEOZEP GINHAWA MISSION

GINHAWA MISSION

The over 3,600 people of different ages, from an expected 3,000, who trooped to the Neozep Ginhawa Mission in Barangay Triangulo in Naga City show the Filipino's great need for medical attention. Unilab Consumer Health offers some help by undertaking the Neozep Ginhawa Mission in poor barangays throughout the country, providing free consultation, medicines and health counseling. Dr. Simon Bonacua of St. John Hospital led the ULCH medical team (shown in photo). Neozep is prescribed by doctors and widely used in households for relief from the common cold.

Bayer Environmental Science upholds Liga ng mga Barangay's advocacy

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo led an esteemed list of honored guests and corporate sponsors to the 7th National Convention of the Liga ng mga Barangay sa Pilipinas held last March 14 to 16 at the Manila Hotel. This included among others key personalities Congressmen Prospero Pichay and Ed Zialcita, Senators Richard Gordon and Pia Cayetano, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr, the director of Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption and Brgy. Chair Mark Diño, along with a host of top-ranks from private corporations.

The Liga ng mga Barangay, created by virtue of Section 491 of the Local Government Code 0f 1991, is an organization of the almost 42,000 barangays throughout the country. Organized primarily for the purpose of determining the representation of the barangay in the Sanggunian, the League's function is also to ventilate, articulate and crystallize issues affecting barangay government administration in order to secure solutions to these concerns.

The theme for this year's convention "Breaking Down Barangay Development into Measurable Units of Excellence in Local Governance" bespeaks of the League's continuing desire to improve the quality of barangay governance which can actually be categorized into eight thematic or service areas namely, (1) Health Care and Well-Being, (2) Food Security and Nutrition, (3) Water and Environmental Protection/ Management, (4) Income/Livelihood and Employment Promotion, (5) Shelter and Housing/ Infrastructure, (6) Peace and Order/ Public Safety, (7) Education and Functional Literacy, and (8) Participation in Governance and Development Processes.

The service areas have paved for the development of the Barangay Development and Governance System (Badegos), a roadmap to good governance, and the Barangay Organizational Reform Agenda (Bora), a strategy in reorganizing and aligning Barangay structures and committees.

Among the eight service areas, Bayer Environmental Science Philippines takes special confidence in their contribution to the advocacy of Health Care and Well-Being in the barangay community level.

Of the five performance indicators under this thematic service area, Bayer has been making visible actions in providing General Hygiene and Sanitation to the member-barangays of the League particularly in the control and prevention of malaria and dengue and other mosquito-born diseases or outbreaks.

At present, vector surveillances are conducted in order to identify dengue sensitive areas, using mosquito larva trapping devices. This practice decreases mosquito population in residential areas, create special anti-dengue epidemic control team in out-break areas and mobilize members of the community for aedes control.

"There are a wide array of products on the market designed for this surveillances. Unfortunately, the vast majority of products simply don't work, or have negligible impact on controlling mosquito. But with Bayer products coupled with their advanced technology for fogging, mosquito population control is assured with significant outcome.", avers Bayani Avergas, Punong Barangay, Bagbagin, Valenzuela.

By far, the Liga ng mga Barangay is the largest organization among local government associations whose members come from grassroot-areas, places in the country which reportedly have high cases of malaria and dengue outbreaks. But considering the nature of the organization's eight-pronged barangay governance program, the Liga ng mga Barangay is deemed a very important and effective force that can advance the Health and Well-being of the poor constituents.

Graphic Expo 2005 at the PTTC

A SPECIAL seminar series is being readied by experts to orient Filipinos on the latest dimensions in high-tech printing, imaging, web publishing, and animation, encompassing practically all areas of graphics, photography and publishing. The seminars will form part of prestigious annual IT event Graphic Expo, which will be held at the Philippine Trade Training Center on June 1 to 4. The seminar series for this 10th edition of Graphic Expo covers 31 specialized topics on digital imaging applications - from desktop and web publishing and large format advertising to pre-press, print production, and multimedia and animation, among many others. Graphic Expo is the country's premier trade show in these fields, all based on a unique concept of digital workflow and process complementation involving various stages of production. Highlighting the seminar series during its 4-day run will be a grand exhibit of this year's latest state-of-the-art products, equipment, facilities, tools and services in desktop and web publishing, digital imaging and photography, pre-press and print production, large format printing, and multimedia and animation. Also featured in the expo are the winning entries in its ongoing annual digital imaging, animation, and art competitions. The winning works will be exhibited at Graphic Expo for the entire duration of the event. The winners, who will receive prizes in cash and in kind, will be announced and awarded at the opening ceremonies of Graphic Expo 2005 on June 1. Inquiries and reservations can be made with Graphic Expo organizer Fiera de Manila Inc - call center: 8960639, 8960637, 8996893; email: fiera@info.com.ph; website: www.fml.com.ph, www.graphicexpo.com.ph.

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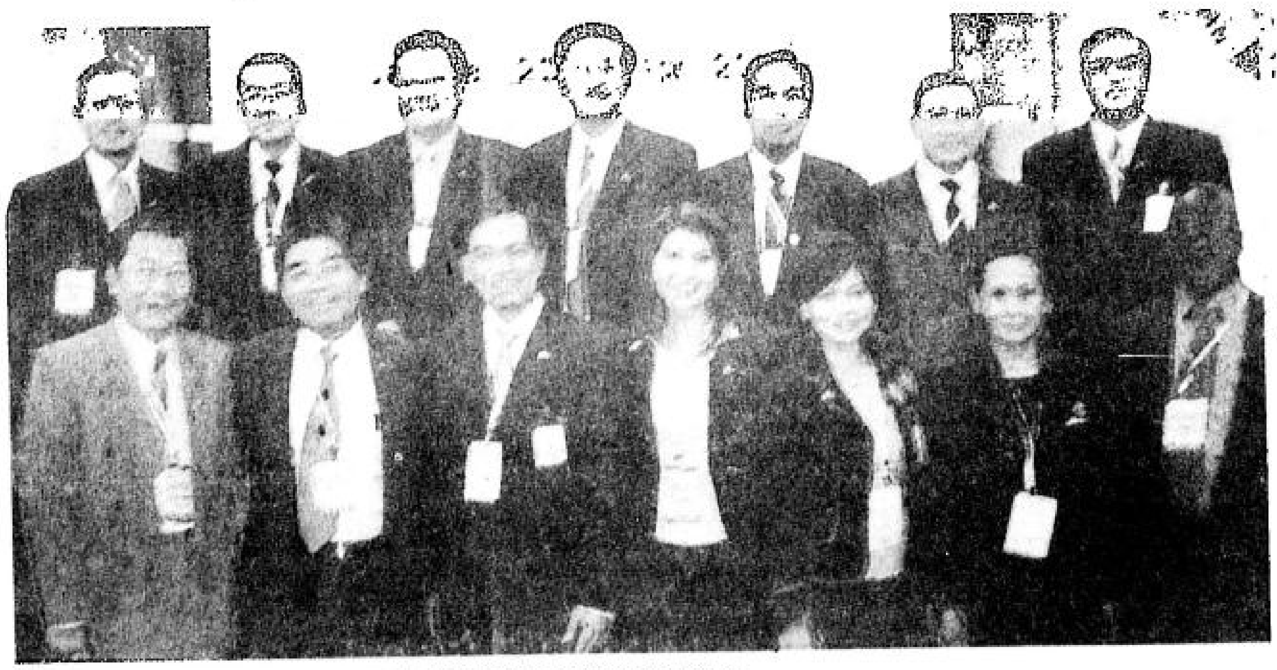


ASIAN, AFRICAN LEADERS RENEWS COMMITMENT

Amid all the changes that have taken place over thu past half century, the spirit to build a better world shared among Asian and African nations has remained alive, as witnessed by the gatherings of the leaders of the two continents in a 2-day summit that ended April 21 to 22. To seal their renewed commitment, the Asian and African leaders signed the new Asian-African strategic partnership and issued a joint statement on tsunamis, earthquakes and other natural disasters. Shown are (at the back, from left) Richard Lee, president, Universal Motor Corp; Jose Concepcion Jr, chair, ABAC and EABC; William Lim, CEO/president, Sea Gold Corp; Henry Co, president, Ford Philippines; Egmidio Jose, president, Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines; Feliciano Torres, president, Yazaki-Torres Manufacturing Inc; Serafin Pantaleon, SVP, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp; (In front, from left) Agustin Mangila Jr; Commercial Attache, Embassy of the Philippines, Philippine Trade and Investment Center; Rodolfo Balmater district governor, Rotary Club, Gambir, Indonesia; Noel Gonzales, president, Muebles Italiano; Eileen Gonzales, vice president, Muebles Italiano; Elizabeth Lee, president, Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines; unknown; Joseph Issifu, vice president, PSABC, Bataan Strategies Technology Inc.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 20, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	30,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	49.5	48.5	49.5	673,700
China Banking Corp.	750	750	750	750	260
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	700,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47	48.5	47	48	287,100
International Exch. Bank	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	87,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	31	31.5	522,400
Prudential Bank	380	380	380	380	10
Philippine National Bank	34	34	33	33	150,300
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	8,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	27	27	27	27	65,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	290	290	290	290	150
Manulife Financial Corp.	2450	2450	2450	2450	990
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	490,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	142	142	142	142	200
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1680	1705	1680	1700	2,370
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13	13	12.75	12.75	32,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.04	1,795,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	835	840	830	835	36,340
Ipeople Inc.	3.45	3.5	3.4	3.4	63,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.045	0.05	0.045	0.05	500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.15	3.2	700,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1450	1470	1445	1465	85,300
Ivantage Corp.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	200,000
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	19,300,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	3,000
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24	23.75	23.75	226,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	5.9	6.1	5.9	6.1	6,014,000
Petron Corp.	3.3	3.35	3.2	3.25	5,126,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.78	1.78	2,372,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.6	758,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	150,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	2,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.57	0.57	240,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.05	3.05	512,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	5,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	22,300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	9,300
Pancake House Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	193,400
San Miguel Corp. B	85.5	85.5	85	85.5	123,500
Universal Robina Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	289,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	1,624,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	50,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.75	4.75	4.7	4.7	1,821,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.94	1.98	1.94	1.98	473,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	2,200
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.94	0.95	11,500,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,300,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.31	670,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.42	2.5	2.42	2.48	1,760,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	10,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8	8	7.8	7.8	411,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44.5	45	44	44.5	129,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	700,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	3,300,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	85,000
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	11,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.72	1.74	1.72	1.72	25,000
Medco Holdings	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	140,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.32	1.32	5,560,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	6,570,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	610,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1	1.1	1	1	62,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	210,000
Sm Investments Corp.	247	248	246	248	1,241,080
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	3,250,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.22	107,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	10,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	20,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.1	5,652,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.24	1.32	1.18	1.32	17,052,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	550,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	51,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	500	500	500	500	400
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.4	7.5	7.2	7.2	8,164,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	400,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	570,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	3,010,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.36	1.4	21,176,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	220,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.85	1,808,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.5	7.3	7.5	3,891,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	8,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.25	4.25	4	4.05	100,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3	3	3	3	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	720,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.31	210,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.014	0.014	0.012	0.013	48,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	19,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	70,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.86	0.86	0.82	0.82	1,780,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.98	0.98	0.94	0.94	1,720,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	29.5	28.5	29	523,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	160,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	19,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	120,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	80,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.48	2.48	250,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	730,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	250,000

CURRENCIES

May 20, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.791264441	1.000000	54.6350
Japan	Yen	0.007352	0.009292	0.5077
United Kingdom	Pound	1.452129	1.835200	100.2662
Hongkong	Dollar	0.101585	0.128383	7.0142
Switzerland	Franc	0.647675	0.818532	44.7205
Canada	Dollar	0.628337	0.794092	43.3852
Singapore	Dollar	0.47799	0.604084	33.0041
Australia	Dollar	0.599761	0.757978	41.4121
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.098956	2.652661	144.9281
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210999	0.266660	14.5690
Brunei	Dollar	0.476551	0.602265	32.9047
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000106	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.019856	0.025094	1.3710
UAE	Dirham	0.215439	0.272272	14.8756
Euro	Euro	1	1.263800	69.0477
Argentina	Peso	0.274506	0.346921	18.9540
Brazil	REAL	0.323031	0.408247	22.3046
Denmark	Kroner	0.134304	0.169733	9.2734
India	Rupee	0.018232	0.023041	1.2588
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.208255	0.263193	14.3795
Mexico	New Peso	0.072159	0.091195	4.9824
New Zealand	Dollar	0.562897	0.711389	38.8667
Norway	Kroner	0.123415	0.155972	8.5215
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013303	0.016812	0.9185
South Africa	Rand	0.123968	0.156671	8.5597
Korea	Won	0.000788	0.000996	0.0544
Sweden	Kroner	0.10876	0.137451	7.5096
Syria	Pound	0.015243	0.019264	1.0525
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.02524	0.031898	1.7427
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000369	0.000466	0.0255

Pure Foods earmarks ₱6B for expansion

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL Pure Foods Co. Inc. (SMPFC), the food manufacturing arm of San Miguel Corp. (SMC), is spending P6 billion this year for the expansion of its ice cream, flour, meats and snack businesses.

SMPFC president Francisco Alejo III yesterday said that part of this year's budget was the completion of the company's Magnolia ice cream plant in Laguna, worth P300 to P400 million. The plant will be completed by next year.

SMPFC chief finance officer Emmanuel Eraña said cash from operations and borrowings would be used to fund the projects of the food group this year.

Officials also said the company aimed to wipe out its first quarter loss of P40 million by the second quarter, with its poultry business already showing signs of recovery.

The rising supply of poultry in the market and the increasing cost of broiler production dragged last year's earnings of SMPFC's poultry business to break-even level.

For the whole group, Alejo said the spiraling cost of production and the higher operating expenses trimmed income from operations to P134 million in the first quarter this year from P294 million a year ago.

Total revenue rose 25 percent to P11.6 billion from P9.2 billion in the first quarter last year.

"March and April [revenues and income] have shown signs of marked improvement, but our confidence stems greatly from the fact that we have made good on our initiatives for 2004," Alejo told stockholders. He however did not disclose the latest figures.

A significant increase in the export business is also seen to contribute to the company's revenue growth for the year.

SMPFC through the regional efforts of its parent firm SMC has been exporting poultry products, flour, processed meats and Magnolia products to some countries in Asia.

Prime Orion net loss up 25%

HOLDING firm Prime Orion Properties Inc. (Popi) said its net loss widened in the first quarter by 25 percent to P209 million from P167.4 million in the same period last year.

Popi is engaged in ceramics manufacturing, soft drinks production and mall development.

The company's net loss widened despite an eight-percent growth in sales revenue due to rising cost of production.

Lepanto Ceramics Inc.'s net loss went down by 16 percent to P129 million from P154 million in the same period last year. Sales rose 62 percent to P170 million from P105 million year-on-year.

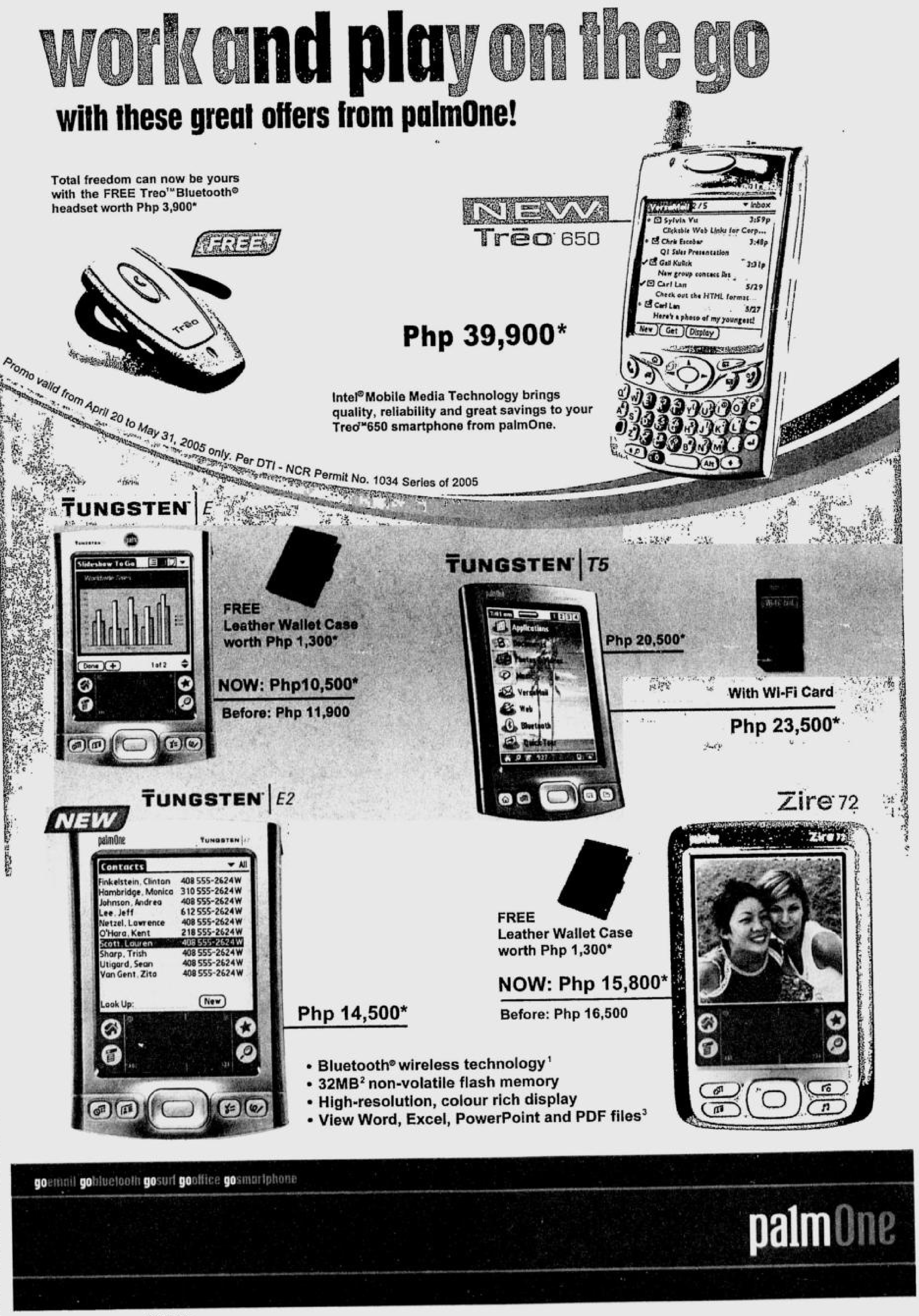
Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines Inc., an affiliate, registered a 13 percent increase in net sales. However, cost and expenses expanded 27 percent to P2.1 million. Financing charges increased 85 percent, slashing Pepsi's net income before tax by 13 percent. It, however, did not disclose the figure.

Pepsi said it would diversify its business to include the sale of non-carbonated beverages. Gatorade, the world's leading sports drink, Tropicana Juices and Lipton Tea will be the first of a series of non-carbonated drinks that Pepsi will start to distribute into the Philippine market.

Tutuban Properties, another subsidiary, posted a 5 percent increase in net revenue to P109 million from P104 million in the same quarter a year ago.

The launch of TPI's Foodstreet increased the number of night market operators resulting in the increase in sales.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez



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Gov't shelves planned euro, yen bond floats

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT has shelved plans to float euro- or yen-denominated bonds to fill in its foreign borrowing requirements, saying market conditions was still unfavorable at the moment.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said that while the Bureau of Treasury intends to diversify the country's foreign loan portfolio, it would be costly for the government at the moment to issue bonds in other currencies. The government, he said, has decided to stick with the US dollar for now, he said.

The Department of Finance earlier expressed interest in issuing euro- and yen-denominated bonds as a strategy to manage the government's debts. Diversifying loan portfolio reduces the country's exposure to foreign exchange risks, it explained. However, issuing bonds in euros has become less attractive because the interest rate in the European market is on the rise.

"For the euro, there is a question of timing. The Euro market was very good a few months ago, but it is not that attractive anymore now," Cruz said. He, however, added that the government would be closely watching the European market for possible euro-denominated bond issue when market condition becomes favorable.

As to the planned yen bond float, Cruz said it might have to be deferred for quite some time because Japanese investors remained cool to Philippine debt offerings mainly because of their "traumatic" experience in lending to emerging markets, such as Latin American countries, that defaulted on their loans.

"Yen is cheap, but the Japanese do not want to lend for now," said Cruz. He said that at the moment, official development assistance was the only form of financing that the Philippine government could get from Japan.

He said the Philippines would have to wait until its credit ratings have improved before Japanese investors would regain their interest in ROP (Republic of the Philippines) bonds.

The government has programmed $4 billion worth of foreign borrowings this year to finance its expenditures that could not be covered by its revenue collection and to pay maturing obligations.

Of the amount, $3.1 billion will be obtained from the commercial markets through bond floats, while the remaining $900 million will come from official development assistance.

The government has already generated $2.25 billion through separated bond floats—one in late January and the other, last week. This means the government still has to borrow $850 million from commercial sources.

The government has programmed a budget deficit this year of P180 billion, but said it was expecting the figure to be substantially lower after the passage of the value-added tax bill.

Under the bill, the VAT exemption of several products and services will be lifted and the President is given a standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next year. This was estimated to generate P28.75 billion in additional revenue in the remaining part of this year, and as much as P105 billion yearly starting next year.

GOINGS ON

InqPulse executive forum

DAVIS

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer will hold the first Inqpulse Executive Forum on Friday, May 27, 2005 from 1:30 to 5 p.m. at the JV Del Rosario Rm., 4th F/ AIM Conference Center Manila, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

Learn from the insights of two of the most dynamic CEOs working today: Tony Davis, president and CEO of Tiger Airways and Gavin Coombes, executive vice president for Euro RSCG Asia-Pacific.

Davis will discuss the emergence of budget-value airline brands in the increasingly competitive Southeast Asian travel market.

Appointed in January 2005, Davis brings to Tiger Airways 18 years of airline experience. He was the founding managing director of bmibaby, the successful British low fares carrier, and led the development of the airline from business plan to a fleet of 14 aircrafts serving 26 destinations in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Continental Europe.

Coombes will talk about the new imperative in today's convergence in Marketing: Sustainable Growth.

Gavin has over 10 years experience in corporate communications and marketing services. He trained and worked as a journalist before moving into public affairs advice for a leading consultancy in his native New Zealand.

Certified franchise exec

SAMIE Lim, chair of the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA), was recently designated certified franchise executive (CFE) by the Institute of Certified Franchise Executives (ICFE), an affiliate of the International Franchise Association Educational Foundation. IFA is the world's largest and the oldest trade organization representing franchising.

Lim, who is also Francorp Philippines chair and vice president for franchising, retail and tourism of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), joined 55 other Batch 2005 CFEs in the graduation rites that coincided with the 45th Annual International Franchise Convention, which was held at the Westin Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood, Florida.

The CFE program provides candidates with expanded knowledge, industry recognition, peer-level networking and professional standing. It was designed for motivated, experienced franchising professionals to enhance their credibility and grasp of franchising's fundamentals and complexities. Candidates must complete a course of study, which includes attending institute-sponsored educational seminars and workshops, to earn the CFE designation.

Bonifacio Heights sold out

DMCI Homes Inc. has sold 95 percent of Bonifacio Heights, the first off-base military residential condominium complex for AFP officers and personnel, in only three months after its launch.

Envisioned to improve the housing condition of AFP officers and enlisted personnel and their families, Bonifacio Heights is the country's biggest military housing joint project of the government and the private sector.

Located at Fort Bonifacio, the project takes pride of its prime location with The Fort, Makati and Ortigas Business and Commercial Districts within reach. It also features high-end amenities such as a grand clubhouse completely equipped with function rooms, swimming pool, basketball court and well-landscaped parks and playgrounds.

JUAN FOR ALL, ALL FOR JUAN
The Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Agriculture have deputized three labor groups—Trade Union Allied Services (Tupas), Federation of Free Workers and Trade Union Congress of the Philippines—to assist in the price monitoring efforts of the government. In a show of solidarity, Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos (center) and Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap (2nd from left) join hands with (from left) Vladimir R. Tupaz of Tupas, Democrito Mendoza of TUCP and Jose D. Cayobit of FFW.

Q2 trade …

From page B1

government, this will be very important because there's a need to increase revenue. After a downgrade by credit rating agencies, borrowing costs have gone up."

He noted that the respondents must have based their concern on the decline in Philippine export receipts in February and March, although he said that from year-to-date there was still a cumulative increase of 3.6 percent over last year.

The government is expecting a growth in export earnings of about 8 percent this year over 2004.

But despite the decline, Guinigundo said the outlook for the second quarter remained positive due to the stability of the peso, increased investments, and the expected increase in consumer spending, in line with the school year opening.

"These factors could help spur business activity and attract more investments, both domestic and foreign," he said.

A total of 898 firms were surveyed inside and outside of the NCR, with a response rate of 68.4 percent.

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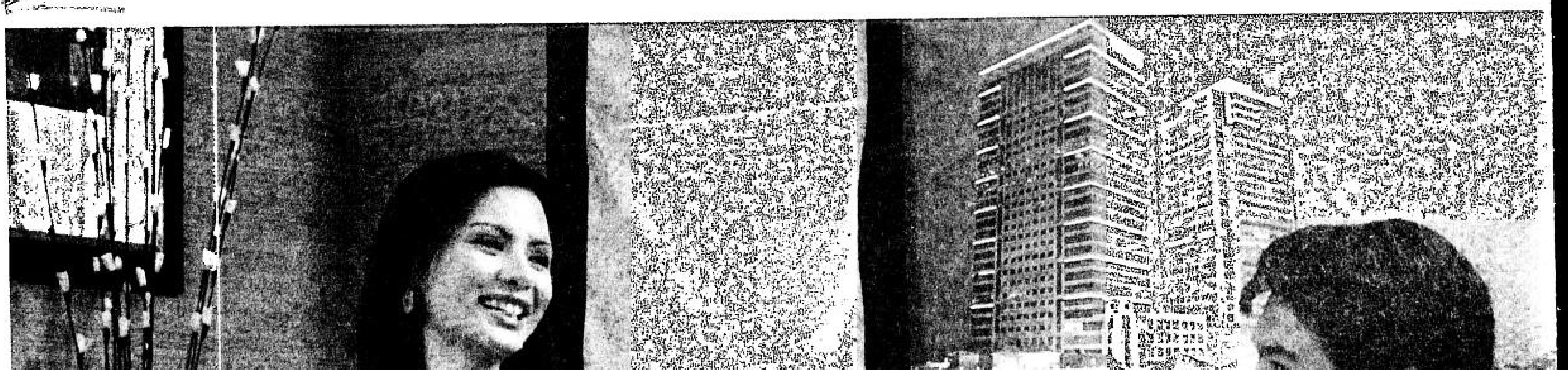

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P2.8B IN ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT
President Macapagal-Arroyo receives at the Palace Ivan Glasenberg, CEO of Swiss firm Glencore International AG, as Willy Strothotte, chair of the company, looks on. The Glencore officials visited the President following the announcement of the company's infusion of P2.86 billion in additional investments into Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining Corp. (Pasar), the country's lone copper smelting plant.

PCPO-MALACAÑANG

TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT

Trade chief orders probe of 'Manila' mango issue

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TRADE Secretary Juan B. Santos yesterday said he had ordered the probe of the reported use of the brand name "Manila" on Mexican mangoes which, he said, was resulting in lost opportunities for local exporters.

"I have directed the Bureau of Export and Trade Promotion to investigate the matter," Santos said. "We will wait for the results of the probe before we take any action, that may include lodging a complaint against the Mexican firms involved."

Quoting a report from the office of Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who heads the Senate committee on agriculture, the trade chief said the Mexican producers' use of the Manila brand was misleading as their mangoes were actually grown in Veracruz, Mexico.

The report went on to say that "while Mexico acknowledges that the seedlings of its 'Manila' mangoes originally came from the Philippines during the colonial period by way of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade, it must accord (the country) due courtesy by awarding us the rightful use of the label."

The senator said that Mexico's Manila mangoes were dominating the United States market. Local mangoes were carrying the brand 'Philippine Super Mangoes,' which was adopted when the industry reentered the US market in 2002.

"[We] will protect our product from such infringement on trademarks," Santos said. "Although [there is no patent on this] we will definitely have a claim to what is ours."

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, mango exports amounted to $31.08 million in 2004, a 0.22-percent increase from $31.01 million in 2003.

The Philippines is the the fifth largest mango producer in the world with 850,000 metric tons a year and the sixth largest exporter with 9-percent of the global market.

Also, Santos urged the country's small and medium mango growers and exporters to continue improving the quality of their produce in order to get a firmer foothold of the growing export market. He said industry players should respond to the intricacies of the global market for fruits by taking into account the changing consumption trends.

"Our mangoes have a unique texture and sweetness that no other suppliers can claim," Santos said.

He added that the DTI had stepped up its strategic marketing efforts to further promote local mangoes in the international market.

NTC, telcos to tap GSM Association for network inspection

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission and the three major players in the mobile phone sector have agreed to tap the GSM Association to conduct an independent inspection of the networks of Smart Communications Inc., Globe Telecom Inc. and Digitel Mobile Phils. Inc.

Tests have to be done to resolve issues on traffic congestion and to determine whether or not the carriers were meeting the NTC performance standard.

The three telcos concerned are alls GSM operators and are members of the global association, which is composed of 660 second and third generation mobile operators and more than 150 manufacturers and suppliers.

Smart, Globe and Digitel (Sun Cellular) believed that the GSM Association would be the most competent and impartial third-party to conduct the network audit.

The schedule and mechanics of the network audit would be drafted in the coming days, according to sources.

GSM is short for global system for mobile, a digital wireless telecom system adopted by Globe as early as 1994 then by Smart in the late '90s and Sun Cellular in 2003.

"The GSM Association has the expertise and the objectivity to conduct the network testing since we are all members of the group," said Rogelio Quevedo, head of legal for Smart.

He estimated that the testing could cost anywhere between 100,000 and 200,000 Euros.

Smart and Globe, he said, were willing to shoulder all the costs.

"The cost of the inspection will be minimal because all the telcos have their own equipment. We will be paying only the inspector's man-hours and it shouldn't cost much," said another telecom executive.

An independent network audit was also a solution that the NTC deemed acceptable after Smart and Globe accused Sun Cellular of failing the performance benchmarks set by the commission.

An NTC circular issued in 2002 required telcos a maximum of 7 percent grade in service and allowed them maximum of only 5 percent drop calls. This means that no more than 7 out of 100 connection attempts should fail on the first try while no more than 5 out of 100 calls should be terminated by the network.

Competitors alleged that because of its 24/7 bucket pricing, Sun Cellular had congested its young network and was doing its customers a big disservice.

Sun Cellular, however, said the NTC should revisit its performance standard given the changes in the competition framework in the wireless industry.

"We are not against imposing standards because that is good for the consumers. What we are saying is that a different standard should be set depending on what we charge consumers," said William Pamintuan, senior vice president of Digitel in an earlier interview.

The performance standard was set in 2002 as the regulator's response to complaints that drop calls were affecting Globe and Smart subscribers.

"The NTC should distinguish the drop calls from calls that we terminate. Years ago, when Globe and Smart were suffering from drop calls, they were charging the calls to consumers even if their network failed. Now, we are not charging our consumers when we drop the call," said Pamintuan earlier.

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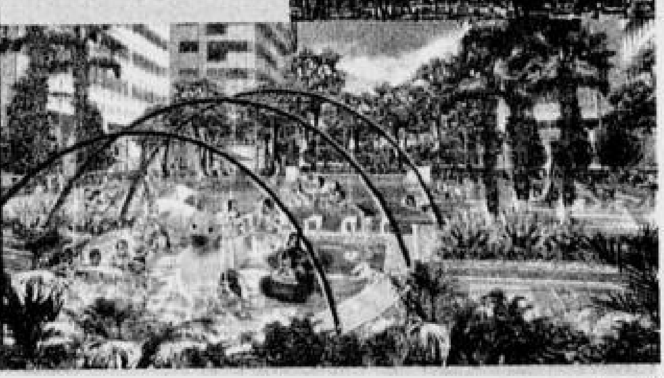

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As part of Legend Hotels International Corp, The Legend Villas carries a tradition of innovation with first class amenities and personalized service. This 100 percent Filipino-owned hotel, with its Filipino charm and warmth, has become attuned to those special requirements from guests who keep coming back fully assured of the same reliable service. The hotel is located along Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong near Edsa.

The 125-room Legend Villas has Family Rooms that can be configured with one queen-sized bed for the parents and two single beds for the kids; or into four individual beds for friends or colleagues who must stay together. The fully-airconditioned Family Room, at 30 sqm., has a walk-in closet, work table, mini-bar, telephone and cable TV. With a three-way toilet and bath, roommates in a rush can wash up privately and still have time to look great for the morning's events.

Team Suites, on the other hand, are perfect for those who come in as team members or business colleagues and leave as good friends. The split-level room is 52 sqm. in size and offers six single beds with individual closets with keys. There are living and dining areas on the ground floor. Each bed also has its own electrical outlet for mobile phones and a reading lamp.

Team Suites have a kitchenette for comfortable in-room snacking, two telephone units, a mini-bar and two work tables to spread out blueprints, campaign materials and other business documents. Two toilets and bath ensure added comfort.

The spacious Team Suites can accommodate up to eight people. Convention participants and even a wedding entourage will find that the rooms were carefully conceived and planned around the needs of large groups. With The Legend Villas' sprawling structure, parking is even available right outside certain rooms.

The Legend Villas offers a variety of rooms and amenities for the needs of business and leisure guests. Take a swim in the outdoor pool or dine on the home-style goodness of Lola Maria, the hotel's coffee shop with international dishes and local favorites. Surf the Internet from your own room or even in the WiFi-connected coffee shop. Do what many returning guests have known for a while. At The Legend Villas, you will be a guest in what could virtually be your own home.

For inquiries, interested parties may call (632) 633-1501 to 10 or visit www.legendvillas.com.ph.

PLANTERSBANK HAILED AS THE LEAD BANK FOR SMES

Plantersbank was recently awarded the 'Most Outstanding Participating Financial Institution' under the Japan Bank for International Cooperation facilities for Small and Medium-Scale Industries by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP). This marks Plantersbank's third consecutive citation for this loan facility. Receiving the award is Plantersbank chair and CEO Ambassador Jesus P. Tambunting (center). Also in photo from left: DBP senior executive vice president Panser E. Tumangan; DBP senior executive vice president and COO Edgardo F. Garcia; DBP president and CEO Reynaldo G. David; Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima; Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) senior representative Tadashi Unoki and DBP chair Vitaliano Nañagas II. The awarding coincided with DBP's anniversary celebration.

Panasonic Scholarship · College
2005 AWARDING CEREMONY & ORIENTATION

PANASONIC BOOSTS NATION-BUILDING THROUGH EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

As part of its continuing commitment to be the country's partner in people development, Panasonic Manufacturing Phils Corp (PMPC), the country's leading manufacturer and distributor of electronic and electrical appliances in the country, has awarded recently the 2005 Panasonic Scholarship for Philippine Colleges and Universities to 12 selected students. Awarded by PMPC president Seiichi Fukami, the third set of scholars will be given a chance to complete a degree in state universities that were identified by the Commission on Higher Education as centers of excellence or development. From these schools, they can choose to take courses in Science and Engineering courses in the fields of Agriculture, Marine Science, Fisheries and Information Technology. The students are: Ryan DC. Enriquez, Taytay, Rizal; Danica Tiozon, Binangonan, Rizal; Ferdinand Bayungan, Taytay, Rizal; Mark Christian Escuadro, Cabanatuan City; Rayshane Luna, Cabanatuan City; Gemmalyn Sabado, Alaminos, Pangasinan; Michael Alexis Mina, Alaminos, Pangasinan; Rechelle Sabino, Albuera, Leyte; Cindy Plando, Alcoy, Cebu; Lalilen Mondejar, Bago City, Negros Occidental, Iazza Mae Bermil, Koronadal, South Cotabato; and Darryl Shane Gravador, Buhangin, Davao City. Selected from all over the country, these students were chosen after a series of tests, interviews and their over-all performance as graduating students in their respective schools for them to be included in the scholarship program. Each of the scholars will receive tuition and matriculation assistance, monthly allowance and an achievement allowance every semester if they show exemplary performance in their studies.

3 new American Standard suites make a dream bathroom possible

LOCAL homeowners who need help not just in planning and designing bathrooms with a "global" look and feel, but on the actual constructing and purchasing of products and fixtures, will definitely welcome American Standard's good news this 2005.

American Standard recently presented Design Solutions, its new global corporate campaign showcasing the latest European-inspired design and technology for the bathroom with the aim to treat the tired city denizen to endless nights of luxury and pure pleasure.

Three stylish, eye-catching bathroom suites form the cornerstone of the company's vision aimed at allowing trend-setting homeowners materialize their dream bathrooms. These are the Marc Newson Suite, the Acacia Suite, and the Tonic Suite.

The Marc Newson Suite is named after its designer Marc Newson, one of the most accomplished and influential contemporary designers of his generation, famous for his work on the "Felt" and "Embryo" chairs. His astonishingly versatile portfolio includes a concept car for Ford, business-class seating for Qantas Airlines, luggage for Samsonite, and hair-care appliances for Vidal Sassoon. He has lent his name to everything from watches to a private jet. And now his name is on a bathroom suite that American Standard will showcase for the year 2005.

The Newson suite features a minimalist look that emphasizes smooth flowing lines. Its ceramic elements are reminiscent of sculptures, seemingly "chiseled" from brilliant white marble blocks whose gently rounded edges create a distinctly soft and harmonious feeling that belies the solidity of their basic design.

The Acacia Suite takes its inspiration from Scandinavia with a clean square minimalist look. It combines the beauty of curves with the geometry of straight lines.

The Tonic Suite is perfect for a natural look, with a feel reminiscent of clear blue water and natural wood. It is ideal for contemporary clutter-free living.

All three bathroom suites include matching sanitary ware, fittings, furniture, and a full range of accessories. Each component is carefully designed to work together in harmony and allow the creation of a total bathroom look.

Moreover, with today's growing concern over environmental health, American Standard has incorporated its unique "Family Health" technology into the Marc Newson, Acacia and Tonic suites to eliminate unwanted bacteria and dangerous elements in the bathroom. The anti-bacterial protection ingredient is permanently built in to American Standard toilets, lavatories and tubs during the manufacturing process to help inhibit the growth of bacteria that causes contamination and odor. This additive kills E Coli and staphi before they can multiply and is engineered to last the lifetime of the product, thus upholding the company's commitment to sanitation for the better health of its customers.

All these products and more will now be made easily available to Filipinos with the launching of American Standard Philippines,.. the new local sales and marketing arm of the world's largest manufacturer and distributor of bathroom and kitchen products.

Sony Ericsson opens 1st regional concept shop in Davao

SONY Ericsson brings its stylish retail concept to Davao City with the opening of the first regional Sony Ericsson Concept Shop at the third floor of the NCCC Mall, MacArthur Highway in Davao City this month.

Featuring the snazzy retail look of Sony Ericsson Concept Shops across Asia, the store offers the latest innovations in Sony Ericsson mobile phones and accessories. Fully trained and accredited service personnel are also on-hand to provide efficient after-sales service. Customers of Sony Ericsson Concept Shops are assured of fast service and the use of only genuine Sony Ericsson parts for their handsets.

An upcoming store attraction is the download station. Users can get in on exciting content ranging from games, wallpapers, screensavers, ringtones and applications available exclusively for Sony Ericsson handsets.

Visitors to the Sony Ericsson Concept Shop can purchase any of the latest in Sony Ericsson mobile phones and accessories with full warranty. With new products like the Sony Ericsson W800i Walkman phone and the 2-megapixel K750i camera phone set to arrive soon, visitors to the Sony Ericsson Concept Shop will be the first to preview a much-awaited mobile product lineup. Also coming up are the dual front-designed K300i, a still and video imaging phone capable of business applications and 3D Java games; the K600i camera phone with a 1.3-megapixel camera and a smooth aluminum design; the fun and colorful J300i with interchangeable Style-Up covers and the popular video game Rayman 3 download for free; and the Z800i clamshell phone, a 3G handset with a 1.3 Megapixel Motion Eye rotating camera.

In Metro Manila, the Sony Ericsson Concept Shop is located in Digital Exchange, Level 3, Glorietta Mall, Ayala Center in Makati City.

ProductFILES

Madagascar Collectibles from Dumex

MADAGASCAR
COLLECT

DUMEX Phils Inc, a subsidiary of a leading nutrition company in Asia, is rewarding its loyal consumers with a national bundling promotion dubbed "Madagascar" Collectibles. Coinciding with the worldwide release of "Madagascar the Movie" of Dreamworks, the promotion is the company's way of rewarding its loyal consumers for patronizing Dumex products. The promotion also gives prospective users an excellent opportunity to try the premium quality milk products by Dumex. Consumer will surely love the first-rate items that come with every purchase of a Dumex 1Plus or Dumex 3Plus Growing-up Milk from leading supermarkets, grocery stores and drugstores nationwide from May 15 to July 31. Items which include lunch boxes, food containers, tumblers, plush toys, bowl and spoon sets and sipping cup have been specially designed for the enjoyment of parents and kids alike. So hurry. Try Dumex Growing-up Milk products today and be part of the wild and funny Madagascar experience

Bits Clips

Island Cove stages 6th Bridal and Debutante's Fair

ISLAND Cove Resort and Leisure Park is again staging its Brides and Debutantes' Fair. Come and experience the different possibilities in celebrating that special day of yours in their Kasalan sa Isla 2005: Island Cove's 6th Bridal and Debutante's Fair, happening on May 28 to 29 at Island Cove's Cavite Hall. Everything you need and hoped for in preparing that most special day of your life are presented under one roof. Entrance is free. Grand opening is on May 28 at 10 a.m. For inquiries, call them at (Makati Line) 810-3718/3732 or (Cavite line) 434-2154 loc. 353 or 0917-5651635. E-mail at marketing@islandcovephil.com or log on to www.kasal.com or www.islandcovephil.com, or text them at 0920-6257037 or 0918-7203339. This event is co-presented by kasal.com and is the 4th leg of Kasalang Pilipino 2005.

'Bazaarista Here I Come'

JOIN the Working Mom Magazine's seminar 'Bazaarista Here I Come'. Know the ins and outs of being a bazaarista by Jenny Garcia, a well-known bazaar organizer with special participation of Spit (Silly People's Improv Theater). To be held today from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the 3rd floor, Delightful Dishes at Taipan Place Emerald Ave., Ortigas City. This free seminar requires pre-registration. Interested parties may call Nathalie Carls or Cathy Bautista at 415-2272 loc. 4667 or 4640, respectively.

Tanduay, Viva Hotbabes concert

ALL roads will lead to Ever-Commonwealth today, when the Tanduay and Viva Hotbabes stage their hottest concert ever at the parking lot at 7 p.m. The Ever-Commonwealth concert is part of the ongoing Tanduay and Viva Hotbabes Nationwide Concert Tour being held in various towns and cities of the country throughout 2005. Major attraction of the Ever-Commonwealth concert will be the alluring Viva Hotbabes Jennifer Lee, Hazel Cabrera, Jaycee Parker and Myles Hernandez. They will perform titillating song and dance numbers to melt the heart of the audience. Supporting them will be top local bands, singers and dancers. To liven up the party, Tanduay will be treating the Ever-Commonwealth crowd to free Tanduay drink mixes and big discounts on all liquor products available at Tanduay booths installed around the parking lot. Free sampling of Tanduay's newest products - Guerrero Brandy and Cossack Vodka will also be conducted.

AMA sponsors E-Learning Conference

AMA Education System (AMAES), Asia's pioneer and largest network of IT-based colleges and universities, sponsors the First National E-Learning Conference in Education to be held on Friday, May 27, at the Pearl Auditorium, Seameo Innotech Bldg, Commonwealth Avenue, UP Diliman, Quezon City. The conference theme is 'Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities in E-learning'. Experts and practitioners from the Commission on ICT, Intel, Oracle, Cisco, Philippine Long Distance Telecommunications (PLDT), Mabuhay Satellite Corp, Yapster, AMA Computer University, and the UP College of Science are expected to serve as plenary speakers. Dr. Patrick Alain Azanza, AMA SVP for Academic Affairs and president of the Philippine National E-learning Association Inc announced that the conference is very significant as it will help define the future of education in the country. E-learning is the latest trend in education and is widely practiced in the United States of America, Japan and Europe. More than 300 academic leaders, university and college presidents, deans, faculty, e-learning practitioners, and students from all over the country are expected to attend. The conference is co-sponsored by the UP College of Science, Intel, PLDT, Mabuhay Satellite Corp, and the Philippine National E-learning Association Inc. Interested participants may contact Arlyn Dela Cruz at 373-3901 local 8318 or 092-24023645 or email addelacruz@amaes.edu.ph.

PONDEROSA LEISURE FARMS' MOTHER'S DAY EVENT

Mothers were serenaded by Jun Ramos, Mary Ann Dela Cruz and Edmond Saflor, who comprise the Spanish Trio, during the Mother's Day Event held at the Ponderosa Leisure Farm is a Spanish-Mexican inspired garden community and is one among Landco Pacific's quality projects. For more details, please visit www.leisurefarms.com.

Her Excellen
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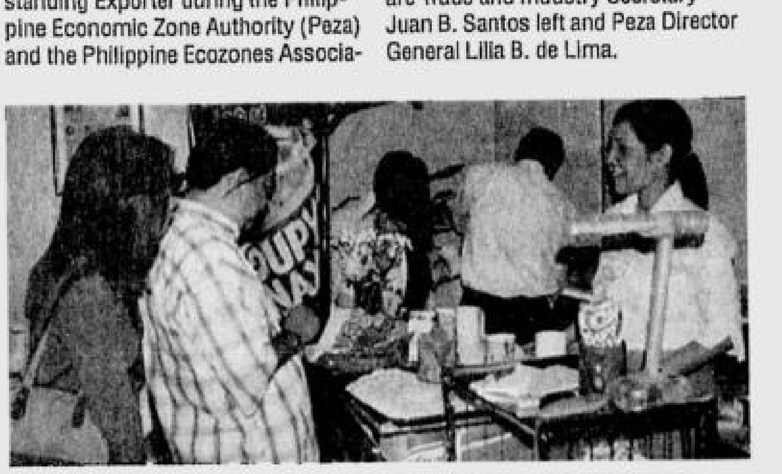
SEPHIL AWARDED OUTSTANDING EXPORTER

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is shown handing over a glass trophy to Joungjin Park of Samsung Electronics Phils which was awarded for Outstanding Exporter during the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) and the Philippine Ecozones Association (Philea) Investor's Recognition held at the World Trade Center. This is the second time that Sephil received this award. Also in the picture are Trade and Industry Secretary Juan B. Santos left and Peza Director General Lilia B. de Lima.



SOUPY SNAX! NOW GOING AROUND IN OFFICES

Soupy Snax! is now going around in offices to let office employees and managers have the energizing and fun experience in having Soupy Snax! Soupy Snax is the new fun way to enjoy your 3 p.m. breaktime and stay alert for the rest of the day. Choose from four great-tasting flavors, Bunch-O-Corn, Munchy Mushroom, Pork n Beef Buzz and Chick-a-Noodle Twist. Soupy Snax! is now available in leading supermarkets and convenience stores nationwide

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AREA I: Las Piñas, Makati, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Pasay and Pateros

CODE	LOCATION/DESCRIPTION	SELLING PRICE
KBPI 86	Lot 2-A-1-H-2 (Formerly 2-A-1-H) Alabang Zapote Road, Las Piñas City. Commercial Lot, improved by two (2) single storey building utilized as office and canteen. Building 1: FA - 104.00 sq.m. & Building 2: FA : 61.00 sq.m.; LA – 594 sq.m.	P 15,000,000
KBPI 161 KBPI 162	Office/Commercial Condo units located at The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City 1. Unit 222, 2/F; Floor Area – 145.06 sq.m. 2. Unit 223, 2/F; Floor Area – 192.05 sq.m.	P 7,900,000 P 10,600,000
KBPI 213	Unit 5B Ponte Salcedo Center (Vernida VII) No. 120 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Residential Unit / Floor Area – 140 sq.m.	P 6,500,000
KBPI 237	No. 130 Lot 33 Blk. 25 Everlasting Circle Road, South Greenheight Subdivision Putatan, Muntinlupa City Improved by One (1) storey residential building with basement. FA – 236.5 sq.m. ; LA – 360 sq.m.	P 3,000,000
KBPI 266	Unit 205, 2nd floor Bayview Tower I, Roxas Boulevard, Paranaque City Residential Unit / Floor Area 105 sq.m.	P 4,000,000
KBPI 211	Lot 8 Blk.9, No.9, Rainbow St., Bricktown Subd., Moonwalk Village, Paranaque City. Improved by two (2) storey residential building Floor Area – 380 sq.m. ; Lot Area – 518 sq. m	P 6,000,000
KBPI 212	Belmont Southpark Townhomes, United Hills Subd., Brgy. San Dionisio, Paranaque City. Consist of 20 Units / Floor Area ranging from 95.34 sq. m. to 182.45 sq. m.	P 12,000/sq. m.
KBPI 178	Chingkiang St., Brgy. San Jose, Pasay City Two adjoining lots with a house. Lot Area – 600 sq.m.	P 8,500,000
KBPI 272	No. 19697 Tulip cor., Pine St., Executive Heights Parañaque City Improved by: Single Storey Split Level Residential House Lot Area= 409 sq.m. Floor Area = 216.26 sq.m.	P 4,500,000
KBPI 278	No. 8110 Santol St., Marcelo Green Village, Phase 4, Brgy. Marcelo Green, Parañaque City. Improved by unfinished Two (2) Storey with Attic and Two (2) Storey Residential Townhouse Type Buildings. Lot Area = Lot A = 36.50 sq.m.; Lot B = 55 sq.m. and Lot D = 38.25 sq.m.	P 2,700,000
KBPI 279	No. 8110 Santol St., Marcelo Green Village, Phase 4, Brgy. Marcelo Green, Parañaque City. Vacant Lot; Lot Area = Lot 4C = 39 sq.m.; Lot 4E = 49.25 sq.m. and Lot 4F = 39 sq.m.	P 600,000
KBPI 273	Unit No. 206-B Hamilton Condominium Bldg. Lakeview Manors Condominium Complex Phase 2, Bagong Calzada, Bo. of Ususan, Taguig, Metro, Manila Improved by Two (2) Bedroom Type Residential Condominium Unit with Floor Area = 37.50 sq.m.; Drying Area (Roofdeck) with Floor Area = 6.50 sq.m.	P 940,000

AREA II: Caloocan, Mandaluyong, Manila, Pasig, Quezon City and San Juan

CODE	LOCATION/DESCRIPTION	SELLING PRICE
KBPI 257	No. 78 Panaganiban St., Bo. Calaanan, Caloocan City Improved by: 4-Storey concrete residential apartment type building Lot Area – 94 sq.m.; Floor Area – 305.82 sq.m.	P 4,500,000
KBPI 274	Lot 1, Blk. 11 Molave cor. Kamagong Street, Hillcrest Village, Novaliches, Caloocan City. Improved by: Two (2) Storey Residential Bldg. with Lot Area = 176 sq.m.; Floor Area = 108 sq.m.	P 1,600,000
KBPI 238	No. 143 Buayang Bato St., Mandaluyong City Improved with a Two (2) storey building. Lot Area - 95 sq.m.; Floor Area – 144 sq.m.	P 1,200,000
KBPI 147	No. 2985 Clemente Street cor. Gabriel Street, Tondo, Manila Improved by a two (2) Storey Residential Building and Candy Factory with roofdeck; Lot Area – 172.00 sq. m., Floor Area – 156.00 sq. m.	P 3,500,000
KBPI 285	Imperial Bay Front Tower, No. 1642 Mabini St., Malate, Manila Unit No. 6 – One (1) Bedroom and 1-Toilet and Bath with Floor Area – 29.36 sq.m. Unit No. 7 – One (1) Bedroom and 1-Toilet and Bath with Floor Area – 29.40 sq.m. Unit No. 1 – One (1) Bedroom and 1-Toilet and Bath with Floor Area – 28.20 sq.m.	P 1,180,000 P 1,250,000 P 1,250,000
KBPI 240	Unit 505 5th Floor, One Magnificent Mile Tower Condo, San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Commercial & Office Space; Floor Area – 86.17 sq.m.	P 4,000,000
KBPI 168 KBPI 169 KBPI 171 KBPI 172	Las Villas del Cielo Townhomes, Brgy. Culiat, Tandang Sora, Quezon City Improved by Two (2) storey residential (townhouse type) condo unit with carport. With three (3) bedrooms and two (2) toilet and bathrooms: 1. Unit 35 – Lot Area – 58.15 sq. m. / Total Floor Area – 102.50 sq. m. 2. Unit 38 – Lot Area – 58.12 sq.m. / Total Floor Area – 101.99 sq.m. 3. Unit 64 – Lot Area – 52.48 sq.m. / Total Floor Area – 98 sq.m. 4. Unit 69 – Lot Area – 58.17 sq.m./ Total Floor Area - 101.75 sq.m.	P 1,500,000 1,750,000 1,800,000 1,550,000
KBPI 187	No. 57, Samar Avenue, Brgy. South Triangle, Quezon City Bungalow with basement and concrete framed building. It has two (2) living rooms, dining room, open terrace with rock garden, foyer, patio, lanai, four (4) bedrooms, six (6) T & Bs, maid quarter, kitchen, storage room, and laundry area at the GF, and family room, guest rooms, library, three (3) T & Bs, driver's quarter and garage at the basement level. Lot Area – 1,500 sq. m. ; Total Floor Area – 585 sq. m.	P 29,900,000
KBPI 191	No. 12, Jude Street, Imelda Village, Brgy. Bahay Toro, Quezon City Improved by a two-level residential building with a single-storey extension type structure. With 3 bedrooms and 2 T & Bs. Lot Area – 252 sq. m.; Floor Area – 192.01 sq. m.	P 3,000,000
KBPI 100 KBPI 101	Ivory Crest Mansion, Gilmore Avenue corner 11TH St., New Manila, Quezon City 1. Unit 3 : Floor Area – 274.65sq.m. 2. Unit 12 : Floor Area - 264.44sq.m.	P 7,000,000 P 7,000,000
KBPI 267	Unit 102 Regalia Park, Tower B., P. Tuazon, Cubao, Quezon City Floor Area – 54.04 sq.m.	P 2,500,000
KBPI 214	Vermont Square Townhomes, Sunshine Compound, Brgy. Crame, Cubao, Quezon City. Consist of Four (4) Units Condominium. 1. VS- 7 : Floor Area – 174.20 sq.m. 2. VS-10 : Floor Area – 174.20 sq.m. 3. VS-14 : Floor Area – 174.20 sq.m. 4. VS-17 : Floor Area – 174.20 sq.m.	P 3,100,000 each
KBPI 280	No. 3 Maunawain St., East Avenue, Quezon City Improved by Residential Building (Bungalow Type) Lot Area – 432 sq.m. Aggrt.; Total Floor Area – 209.35 sq.m.	P 6,000,000
KBPI 117 KBPI 118 KBPI 119	Luxor Villas Townhomes, Santolan Road, San Juan, Metro Manila Four (4) storey concrete bldg. with parking space. 1. Unit 4 : Floor Area – 280.00sq.m. 2. Unit 5 : Floor Area – 280.00sq.m. 3. Unit 9 : Floor Area – 280.00sq.m.	P 6,500,000 each
KBPI 284	N. Domingo Street, San Juan, Metro Manila Improved by one (1) storey concrete building (Office Building) Lot Area – 490sq.m.; Floor Area - 185sq.m.	P 18,000,000
KBPI 281	Along and Interior Kabesang Imo Road, Balangkas, Valenzuela Vacant Lot; Lot Area – 4,987 sq.m. (Aggr't)	P 1,500,000

AREA III: Rizal Area

CODE	LOCATION/DESCRIPTION	SELLING PRICE
KBPI 55	Lot 10, Block 1, Mission Hills., Brgy. Muzon, Angono, Rizal Vacant Residential Lot with an area of 894 sq.m. Fully developed residential subdivision which is few kilometers away from Antipolo Town Proper: Equipped with basic amenities and utilities of a middle to upper middle class subd.	P 1,700,000
KBPI 282	Lot 10 Blk. 14 Cotton Drive, Cottonwoods Heights, Antipolo City Improved by Two (2) Storey Residential Building Lot Area – 213 sq.m.; Total Floor Area – 112.50 sq.m.	P 2,700,000
KBPI 283	Lot 10 Blk. 6, Road Lot 5, Goldland Eastwood Townhomes, Beaver St., Village East Executive Homes, Cainta, Rizal Improved by Two (2) Storey Residential Townhouse – Type Residential Building Lot Area – 51 sq.m.; Total Floor Area – 68.60 sq.m.	P 1,200,000

AREA IV: South Luzon Area

CODE	LOCATION/DESCRIPTION	SELLING PRICE
KBPI 269	Lot 11177-A-1, Barangay Anilao, Lipa City, Batangas Lot Area – 10,000 sq.m.	P 3,000,000
KBPI 259	Lot 6 Blk. 47, Blue Bird St., (Road Lot 46) Canyon Woods Res.Resort, Phase II, Brgy. San Gregorio, Talisay, Batangas Improved by Two (2) storey residential building. Lot Area - 413 sq.m. ; Floor Area – 259 sq.m.	P 7,500,000
KBPI 61	Capitol Hills Executive Subdivision, Trece Martirez City, Cavite Various Vacant Residential Lots – 169 lots ranging from 39 sq. m. to 72 sq. m. lot area. Classified as low to economy housing subdivision. The subdivision is located at the rear side of Cavite Capitol within the Trece Martirez Town Proper. It is a fully developed subdivision.	P 1,800/sq. m.
KBPI 106	Rodeo Hills Subdivision, Alfonso, Cavite Vacant Residential lots – 16 Lots ranging from 320 sq. m. to 668 sq. m. lot area Vacant Residential Lots – 30 Lots ranging from 320 sq.m. to 668 sq m. lot area	P 1,500/sq. m. P 1,400 /sq.m. to 2,500/sq.m.
KBPI 107	Rodeo Countryside Estate, Alfonso, Cavite Consists of two (2) Vacant Residential Lots with lot areas of 1000 sq. m. and 2000 sq. m.	P 1,500/ sq. m.
KBPI 221	Lot 15, Blk. 2, Bravo Street, Orientville I Subdivision, Molino, Bacoor, Cavite. Lot Area – 258 sq.m. Improved by: Bldg.1: one (1) storey split level residential building / FA–90 sq.m. Bldg. 2: two (2) storey residential building / FA – 96 sq.m.	P 1,500,000
KBPI 242	Barangay Lantik, Carmona Cavite Lot Area – 17,700sq.m. + 16,324sq.m. + 1,536sq.m. = 35,560 sq.m. @ P1,700/sq.m.	P 40,000,000
KBPI 183	Lot 14 & 16, Blk. 29, Road 28, Town & Country Dasmariñas, Brgy. Burol, Dasmariñas, Cavite. Vacant Lot / Lot Area = 192 sq. m.	P 650,000
KBPI 194	Lot 33, Block 12, Cityview Dasmariñas III Subdivision, Bo. Malinta, Dasmariñas, Cavite. Vacant lot with an area of 592 sq. m.	P 450,000
KBPI 271	Lot 7 Block 30 Stateland Subdivision, Phase I, Buenavista, General Trias, Cavite City. Vacant Lot. Lot Area – 523 sq.m.	P 630,000
KBPI 114	Lot 833 Plan GSS-877 Bo. San Vicente, San Pedro, Laguna Vacant Lot / Lot Area – 841 sq.m.	P 1,500,000
KBPI 222	Pennsylvania corner Utah Streets, Town & Country Southville Subd., Biñan, Laguna. Vacant Lot / Lot Area – 262 sq.m.	P 750,000
KBPI 111	Taguntong Hills, Taysan, Legaspi City A lot uphill along Legazpi-Manito traverse road, Improved by a two-storey residential building (upper level) while the lower level consists of 3-door apartment units. Location is about 5 kms. road-distant from Legazpi City Proper. LA – 2,548 sq. m. / FA – 507.38 sq. m.	P 6,600,000
KBPI 112	Four (4) adjoining residential lots with a total area of 479 sq. m., situated along the Legazpi-Manito National Highway. With two-storey townhouse unit with basement. Overlooking Mayon Volcano.	P 3,100,000
KBPI 275	Lot 41, Blk. 1 Citta Italia Phase 2, Bacoor, Cavite Improved by: Two (2) storey Residential House – Medicci Model House Lot Area = 144 sq.m.; Floor Area = 60.46 sq.m.	P 1,500,000

AREA V: North Luzon Area

CODE	LOCATION/DESCRIPTION	SELLING PRICE
KBPI 10 KBPI 11	Unit #2 & Unit #3, Eagle Crest Townhouse Phase 1, Bakakeng Norte Road, Baguio CityTownhouse Unit – LA – 120 sq. m. & FA – 162 sq. m.; Eagle crest is about 3 km. away from Marcos Highway; Within the vicinity are Tierra Crest Villas, Richmond Estate, Ciudad Grande & Richgate Subdivision; The unit is a 3-level townhouse w/ basement which consists of 2 big BR & 3 T&B.; It is also equipped with fireplace and water supply is substantial.; Public transportation is available within the site.	P 1,700,000each
KBPI 250 KBPI 253	Kabukiran Homes Subdivision, Barangay Tabe, Guiguinto, Bulacan 1. Block 1 Lot 4 : Lot Area – 79 sq.m. ; Floor Area – 42 sq.m. 2. Block 9 Lot 26 : Lot Area – 78 sq.m. @ P1,500/sq.m.	P 265,500 P 117,000
KBPI 243	383 Bonuan Binloc, Dagupan City 2 Storey residential building – 93% Finished Lot Area – 219 sq.m. ; Floor Area – 176.50 sq.m.	P 1,700,000
KBPI 277	Lot 4-A-11, Brgy. San Jose, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan Improved by: - One (1) Storey Residential Bldg.; Floor Area = 104.4 sq.m. - Two (2) Storey Residential Bldg. (81% Finished) Floor Area = 53.6 sq.m. - Warehouse (72.5% Finished) Floor Area = 283.6 sq.m. Lot Area = 1,462 sq.m.	P 5,300,000

AREA VI: Visayas and Mindanao Area

CODE	LOCATION/DESCRIPTION	SELLING PRICE
KBPI 284	Tayud, Lilo-An, Cebu Improved by Bungalow – Single Detached Lot Area – 1,023 sq.m.; Total Floor Area – 216 sq.m.	P 2,800,000
KBPI 160	L. J. Ledesma Subdivision, Brgy. Buhang, Jaro, Iloilo City Consisting of 63 vacant residential Lots with an average area of 60 sq. m. Site is approximately 15 minutes drive from the city proper.	P 1,500/sq. m.
KBPI 185	Petalsville Subdivision, Brgy. Tabuk Suba, Jaro, Iloilo City Vacant lots with partial developed residential subdivision, consisting of 192 lots with an aggregate area of 48,419 sq. m.; Approximately 400 meters northwest from the national road and about 2 kms. Northeast of Municipality of Jaro.	P 800/sq. m. to 1,000/sq. m.
KBPI 229	Emerald St., Ecoland Subd., Phase IV, Barangay Matina, Davao City Improved by one (1) storey residential building Lot Area – 470 sq.m.; Floor Area – 120 sq.m.	P 2,500,000
KBPI 261	Belisario Heights, Buhangin, Davao City Vacant Lot; Lot Area - 1000 sq.m.	P 2,000,000
KBPI 249	Interior Macrohon Drive, Canelar Paint Trade Center Canelar St., Zamboanga City With proposed two (2) storey apartment building (35% Finished) Lot Area – 665 sq.m. ; Floor Area – 143.40 sq.m.	P 4,000,000
KBPI 234	Capisan, Upper San Roque, Zamboanga City Vacant Lot / Lot Area – 9,491 sq.m.	P 95,000
KBPI 227	No. 185 Sta. Barbara St., Zamboanga City Improved by Four (4) Bedroom Two (2) Storey Residential Building Lot Area – 343 sq.m.; Total Floor Area – 229.35 sq.m.	P 2,200,000
KBPI 93	No. 28-A Sta. Barbara, Zamboanga City. House & Lot – LA-500 sq. m.; FA-191.70 sq. m. Two (2) adjoining lots with a total area of 500 sq. m. (250 sq. m. per lot), improved by a concrete single-storey residential building with a floor area of 144.27 sq. m. With five (5) bedrooms and two (2) toilet & bathrooms.	P 1,600,000

Prices, interest rates and terms are subject to change without prior notice.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The BUYER receives and accepts the property on an "AS-IS WHERE-IS" basis. "AS-IS WHERE-IS" basis shall mean that the SELLER makes no warranty as to the quality and physical condition of the property and that the BUYER buys and takes it in the condition that it is found and from the place where it is located, as well as all legal actions and encumbrances on the property that the BUYER knows or ought to know.
2. Buyers are enjoined to personally inspect / investigate/verify the actual site, condition, and status of the real properties and improvements, if any, and chattels as well as all the documents of ownership with the appropriate Register of Deeds before formally submitting their offers. Buyers are also advised that some of the above properties are subject of on-going litigation proceedings.
3. Properties will be sold on a "FIRST-COME FIRST –SERVE BASIS. The term "first–come, first–serve" shall mean any offer to purchase in cash based on the price indicated herein shall be given first priority. Offer to purchase thru term financing via Bank loan shall be evaluated for management approval.
4. Keppel Bank reserves the right to reject any offer to purchase which are below the price indicated herein. The decision of Keppel Bank is final and binding.

ALL BROKERS ARE WELCOME!!!

as of April 2005

SBMA DISPOSAL COMMITTEE
SBMA Bldg. 709, Cor. Burgos & Quezon Sts.,
Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Phils. 2222
Telephone (6347) 252-4613/4219 / 4474 Fax: (6347) 252-4339

INVITATION TO BID

FOR THE SALE OF ASSORTED DISPOSABLE / SURPLUS / UNSERVICEABLE AND OTHER SCRAP MATERIALS "AS IS, WHERE IS"

ITEM	DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	SCHEDULE OF BIDDING
LOT 1	Assorted Scrap Materials & Electrical Wire (asstd sizes) located at B-709 & 738 PPMD Yard, SBFZ	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 2	Assorted Used Office/Housing Furnitures and Appliances located at B-709 PPMD Yard, SBFZ	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 3	Assorted Used IT Equipments, Keyboards, AVRs, Printers, CPU Housing and Other Related Accessories located at B-896 former Wel Phil Warehouse, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 4	Electrical Substation & Pole Mounted Transformers and Other Related Accessories located at B-709 PPMD-Yard, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 5	Used Oil, Batteries & Tires located at PPMD Yard B-709 and at Transportation Dept. Open Yard	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 6	Used Plumbing Fixtures and Accessories located at B-709 and B-738 PPMD Yard.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 7	Unserviceable Pollution, Spill Control (Donut Type) located at Microvan Yard, SBFZ	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 8	Unserviceable Portal Crane located at Alava & Riviera Pier, SRF Compound, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 9	Assorted Unserviceable Vehicles located at Microvan Yard, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 10	Fire-Damaged Bldg. Structure for Demolition & Disposal (CA32, former KACE, Phils.) located at Dewey Avenue, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 11	Used Tricycle with Trailer from Full Power Corporation located at Bldg. 738 Warehouse Dewey Ave., SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 12	Used Sewing Machines and Other Assorted Related Items from American Sports Grp. (ASG) located at Bldg. 56 Naval Station, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 13	Used Sewing Machines and Other Assorted Related Items from JAYCEE Subic Corp. located at Bldg. 738, PPMD Warehouse, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 14	Used Sewing Machines and Other Assorted Related Items from SamDon Int'l. Co. (SDIC) located at Bldg. 738, SBFZ.	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM
Lot 15	Used Injection Machine with Cooling Tower from Wel Phil Inc. located at Bldg. 896, SBFZ	June 15, 2005 2:00 PM

I. Buyers are requested to submit the following Pre-qualification documents at the Procurement and Property Management Department (PPMD), Bldg. 255, SBMA, Subic Bay Freeport Zone.
SEC Registration (Partnership/Corporation); DTI Certificate of Registration (if not corporation); Valid Mayor's Permit; VAT Registration; Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years; Company Profile; List of Clients; Latest Income Tax Return (ITR, 2004); Certification of Cash Deposit of a reputable bank.

II. Deadline of submission of the Pre-Qualification Papers is on *May 27, 2005, Friday (5:00 PM)*, No extension.

III. Pre-Bid Conference and Issuance of Bid Forms (P100.00 per set) will be on *June 8, 2005, Wed (2:00 PM)*

IV. Bid Bond is required in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price in favor of SBMA.

V. Inspection will strictly be by group on the following schedules:

LOT	DATE	TIME
1 to 15	June 2 & 3, 2005	9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

VI. For other information, inquiries and/ or request for inspection, call Tel. Nos. (047) 252-4613 / 4219.

VII. SBMA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality found therein or to reject/accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to SBMA.

Done this 5th day of May 2005.

(Sgd.) RAMON M. DE LEON
DA for Administration
Chairman, Disposal Committee

(PDI – May 14 & 21, 2005)

NOTICE OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Notice is hereby given that following an Order issued under Section 8 of the Organised and Serious Crimes Ordinance, Cap 455 of the Laws of Hong Kong the assets of the Respondents in Hong Kong were confiscated. On 5th May 2005 the Restraint Order over the assets of the Respondents HCMP 4221 of 2002 was then discharged.

Amador PASTRANA Philippines passport ZZ017001 Date of birth 4th May 1972.	Respondent 1
Alpha Company Ltd Company No 15011	Respondent 2
Jindell Investment Ltd Company No 367520	Respondent 3
Jupiter Advisory Ltd Company No 407452	Respondent 4
First Pacific Company Ltd Company No 7009	Respondent 5
Systems International Ltd Company No 105043B	Respondent 6
Callmax Enterprises Ltd Company No 407451	Respondent 7
Cyplus Company Ltd Company No 114160B	Respondent 8
Joplo Company Ltd Company No 16592	Respondent 9
Nobuko Investments Ltd Company No 371740	Respondent 10
Prudence International Ltd Company No 16156	Respondent 11
Wains International Company Ltd Company No 391025	Respondent 12
Moneycare International Ltd Company No 407450	Respondent 13
Chamomile International Ltd Company No 741159	Respondent 14
Highstone Investments Ltd Company No 112158B	Respondent 15
Sabre International Ltd Company No 6470	Respondent 16
Vantage International Management Group Inc. Company No 8403	Respondent 17
Union Trading Ltd Company No 15014	Respondent 18
Novelle Investment Partners Ltd (Bahamas) Company No 81563B	Respondent 19
United Resources Asset Management Inc SEC Reg No A200005310	Respondent 20
Allied European Holdings Ltd Company No 8313	Respondent 21

Any person or company who is a Respondent can obtain a copy of the order from either Ma. Elmira A. Alconaba, Assistant Director, Compliance and Enforcement Department Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, or Detective Senior Inspector David COPE, Financial Investigations Division, Hong Kong Police, 21st Floor, Arsenal House West Wing, Police Headquarters, Arsenal Street, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. HCMP 4221 of 2002 refers.

(PDI – May 19, 20 & 21, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
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E-mail. member_relations@sss.gov.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

	NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBER	DATE OF DEMISE
1)	Belen Alma Boco	1165-C Arellano St., Singalong, Manila	Angelo Boco SS#03-317-1443-4	January 11, 2005
2)	Elidia Bunagan	1477 E. Rodriguez, Quezon City	Jose A. Bunagan SS#03-6797292-3	March 21, 2005
3)	Flordeliz Nunez	101 Canoy M. dela Cruz, Pasay City	Reynaldo T. Bungay SS#03-2738657	November 4, 2001
4)	Dolores S. Villapana	Bonifacio St., Cotabato City	Rafael C. Carillo, Jr. SS#09-0550945-7	October 19, 1997
5)	Potenciano & Lourdes Salvador	Blk 18 L6 Yellow Bell St., BF Homes, Novaliches, QC	Manuela Castro SS#03-8982440-2	October 5, 2004
6)	Lourdes Cirilo	Unknown	Pedro S. Cirilo SS#03-2524162-5	July 1, 2004
7)	Rosa Dacilo Fe Malbas	Gordon Heights, Olongapo City	Artemio P. Dacilo SS#02-1306492-7	February 13, 2005
8)	Felix Silvestre	Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija	Yolanda Delos Santos SS#02-0083172-3	July 17, 2004
9)	Alice Diaz	Parañaque City	Armando Diaz SS#05-0177608-2	November 1, 2004
10)	Raul J. Quilcan	Butuan City, Agusan del Norte	Roselle M. Estimado-Quilcan SS#04-0773221-4	February 23, 2004
11)	Maria Larista	59 A. Lopez St., Cebu City	Bienvenido Fabillo SS#06-0138532-8	June 5, 2003
12)	Remigio Fernando	Unknown	Rosalia Fernando SS#33-5307518-7	October 1, 2003
13)	Trinedad B. Francisco	284 MH Del Pilar St., Palatin, Pasig, Metro Manila	Renato Francisco SS#03-5913060-5	December 31, 2003
14)	Mildred Geraldez	Unknown	Adelaida Geraldez SS#06-0792448-2	February 11, 1998
15)	Leonora A. Haguisan Julieta & Ferdinand	Brgy. Sarmiento, Parang, Maguindanao	Artemio Haguisan SS#09-0219051-3	July 18, 2004
16)	Emely Ochoa Hanopol Porcival Hanopol Arminda Hanopol Roberto Hanopol	Ususan, Tagig, Rizal	Rodolfo Hanopol SS#03-2012180-5	January 3, 2005
17)	Clarizel Hernandez	Parang, Marikina	Romeo G. Hernandez SS#03-3483412-0	April 9, 2004
18)	Cesaria Innis	Sagkahan, Tacloban City	Emmanuel Innis SS#06-0009193-0	March 6, 2005
19)	Jenelyn Magalona	Unknown	Oscar Magalona SS#03-2709844-9	December 25, 1993
20)	Julian Manalo	Unknown	Gloria Manalo SS#03-2850418-1	January 13, 2005
21)	Arceli R. Domingo	Cumunal, Calapan, Oriental Mindoro	Antonio Marquez SS#03-1422563-6	May 5, 2004
22)	Antonio P. Bernardo	Unknown	Amanda A. Pumarada SS#03-3800195-9	April 11, 2004
23)	Vicente Quimba Florencia Quimba	Unknown	Rosario Quimba SS#03-0731300-5	May 4, 1986
24)	Cherita L. Remarca	Unknown	Alfredo N. Remarca SS#02-0626556-8	January 12, 2005
25)	Magdalina Robredillo	Tacloban City	Guillermo Robredillo SS#03-0793881-7	November 8, 2004
26)	Segundina S. Abuyen	Tacloban City	Marcelino Rosales SS#06-0035236-5	August 6, 2004
27)	Vicenta Mauro	Montalban, Rizal	Arturo R. Sales SS#05-0151890-7	February 11, 2005
28)	Jocelyn Samillano Saraos	849 San Pedro Ext., Davao City	Franklin L. Saraos SS#08-0492605-0	April 7, 2004
29)	Nilda Oliw-Oliw	UP Pook Dagohoy, Diliman, Quezon City	Vivencio Tizon SS#03-0401633-4	October 18, 2004
30)	Cristeta Sierra	32 Interior Bambang, Taguig, M.M.	Roberto Espina Ybasco SS#03-3497004-2	July 6, 2004

– Nothing Follows –

(PDI – May 21, 2005)

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HOUSE

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CTL8 Furn 1BR P13T 9299835

NEW STUDIO / Coml / 2BR 6.5Tup 1672 Dian St. Mkti 843-9418•0918 9390355 Rose

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TransCo
NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION
South Luzon, Operation & Maintenance

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. TRANSCO 2005-06C

The National Transmission Corporation, South Luzon O&M Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) wishes to invite interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

DATE OF BIDDING: JUNE 28, 2005; 1:30 PM

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER	APPROVED BUDGET
C1	1 LOT	DISMANTLING OF APPURTENANCES, LOADING, REPAIR OF TRANSFORMER INCLUDING HAULING FROM/TO MAKBAN S/S INCL. REPAINTING, RE-ASSEMBLY & TESTING	3LAG-05-136	P 20,000,000.00

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference for the above schedule shall be held on June 08, 2005; 1:30 PM at the OAVP Conference Room.

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat/MMS, Administration Division, SLO&M, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 per bidding schedule, starting May 24, 2005. No bid documents shall be issued on the date of bidding.

Bids shall be received at the Conference Room (OAVP), Transco-SL O&M, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna until the specified date and time of bidding above after which said bids shall be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulation used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "R.A. 9184".

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft, or 1.5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by GSIS or a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality or defect therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

TRANSCO-South Luzon's other requirements are posted at the DBM Website www.procurementservice.net and at the TRANSCO Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) R. B. VERGARA
Chairman-BAC

(PDI--May 21, 2005)

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1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% W/O TAKING CAR 5221001

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/out taking car 6567685

2% w/out taking car 5315577

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BILLIARDS

Sale/Rental/Servce 8014494 0464771344 09179870097

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SWEATER KARACHI 09198409100

OTHER EQUIPMENT

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PETS

BEAGLE 6MOS 09106761055

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Dog Trainer 0919-2050952

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late CATALINA JAVIER was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No. 93, Page No. 21, Book No. 93, Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Domingo Tejero of Pasig City.
(PDI-May 21 28 & June 4, 2005)

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❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

"I have completed well, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith"
2 Timothy 4:7

ALEXANDER C. CAMAYANG

Peacefully joined our Lord
on May 19, 2005 at the age of 37.

His loving father **Col. Alfonso Camayang** (Ret.), loving mother **Elisa Carrillo Camayang** (†), sisters **Carol C. Nazareno** (†), **Miriam C. Camayang** and **Grace C. Felix**; brothers **Alfonso C. Camayang Jr.**, **Anthony C. Camayang**; sisters and brothers in-laws, nieces, nephews and other relatives request prayers for his everlasting joy in the company of angels and saints.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Ave., Q.C.

Interment will be on May 25, 2005 at San Antonio Memorial Park, Pila Laguna after the 9:00A.M. Mass at Saint Anthony Shrine.

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JOSE MANUEL L. VILLANUEVA

October 15, 1953 - May 21, 2001

Carmelite Convent, Gilmore, Quezon City	6:30 AM
Christ the King, Quezon City	6:30 AM
Immaculate Conception, Cubao, QC	7:00 AM
Mount Carmel, Quezon City	6:00 AM 7:00 AM / 6:00 PM
Makati Medical Chapel	7:30 AM
St. Joseph, Mt. View, CA	8:00 AM
St. Martin, Sunnyvale, CA	8:30 AM
St. Peter's Church, LA, CA	6:00 PM

The family requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines, Department of Transportation and Communications
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY
Cebu Maritime Regional Office, Ground Floor CCCI Center, cor. 11th & 13th Avenues,
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

Case No. CMRO 05-083

RE: Application for grant of certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate a liner service in the operation of its ship/s in its/their applied route for the carriage of passengers and to charge deregulated rates and to operate under a deregulated schedule of trips pursuant to Republic Act No. 9295 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations

EPETACIO S. OTERO, JR.,
Applicant
x-----------------------------------x

ORDER

This refers to the Application for grant of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate the following ship/s in its their route/s, under the following sailing frequency/ies, schedule of trips and rates

1. For Liner Operation

Name of Ship/s	Service/s offered/to be offered
MBCA ESPERANZA - B	Carriage of Passengers and Cargoes

Route/s to be served:
Sunog-Bokok-Gunkan-an-Ormoc & vice versa; Gunkan-an-Puertobello-Baybay, Leyte & vice versa

Sailing Frequency(ies)/ Schedule

Departure			Arrival		
Port	Day	Time	Port	Day	Time
(EXCEPT TUESDAY)					
Sunog	Daily	5:00 AM	Bokok	Daily	5:30 AM
Bokok	Daily	5:45 AM	Gunkan-an	Daily	6:15 AM
Gunkan-an	Daily	6:45 AM	Ormoc	Daily	9:45 AM
Ormoc	Daily	12:00 NN	Gunkan-an	Daily	2:00 PM
Gunkan-an	Daily	3:00 PM	Sunog	Daily	4:00 PM
Gunkan-an	Tue	5:00 AM	Puertobello	Tue	6:00 AM
Puertobello	Tue	6:45 AM	Baybay	Tue	9:00 AM
Baybay	Tue	12:00 NN	Puertobello	Tue	2:00 PM
Puertobello	Tue	3:00 PM	Gunkan-an	Tue	4:00 PM

Schedule of Rates (Per Link)

Passage Rates

LINKS		Type of Accommodation/Class	Rate
From	To		
Sunog	Bokok	–	P 120.00
Bokok	Gunkan-an	–	P 120.00
Gunkan-an	Ormoc	–	P 120.00
Ormoc	Gunkan-an	–	P 120.00
Gunkan-an	Sunog	–	P 120.00
Gunkan-an	Puertobello	–	P 130.00
Puertobello	Baybay	–	P 130.00
Baybay	Puertobello	–	P 130.00
Puertobello	Gunkan-an	–	P 130.00

Cargo Rates

LINKS		Type of Cargo	Unit of Measure	Rate/ Unit
From	To			
Sunog	Bokok	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Bokok	Gunkan-an	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Gunkan-an	Ormoc	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Ormoc	Gunkan-an	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Gunkan-an	Sunog	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Gunkan-an	Puertobello	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Puertobello	Baybay	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Baybay	Puertobello	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10
Puertobello	Gunkan-an	Assorted	Per kilo	P 0.10

The Applicant shall cause then publication of this order once in a newspaper once in any of the five (5) major newspaper of national circulation in the Philippines.

The Applicant shall likewise simultaneously cause the posting of this Order in a conspicuous place at the affected ports, ships, Applicant's premises, passenger terminal/s and ticketing offices as applicable.

The Applicant shall present the jurisdictional, qualification and documentary requirements in a summary proceeding to be conducted on 23 May 2005 at 2:30 PM at the Hearing Room, Cebu Maritime Regional Office, Ground Floor, CCCI Bldg. cor. 11th and 13th Avenues, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City which is within seven (7) days from the date of publication/posting.

The Applicant shall be required to make a written Formal Offer of Evidence (FOE), afterwhich, the application is deemed submitted for resolution/decision.

WITNESS the Honorable Administrator, VICENTE T. SUAZO, JR. this 19th day of May 2005 at Cebu City, Philippines.

(Original Sgd.) LUCITA T. MADARANG
Regional Director

(PDI – May 21, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Meralco Avenue, DepED Complex, Pasig City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Fortified Noodles and Biscuits

1. The Health and Nutrition Center (HNC) of the **Department of Education (DepED)**, through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) is inviting suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following package:

Package No.	Goods	Approved Budget per package
1	Fortified Instant Noodles	P4,800,000.00
2	Fortified Biscuits	P7,164,000.00
	Total	**P11,964,000.00**

Bids received in excess of the approved budget per package shall be rejected. The total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is **PHILIPPINE PESOS ELEVEN MILLION NINE HUNDRED SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND AND 00/100 ONLY (PhP11,964,000.00).**

2. The **DepED**, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of the Goods to DepED HNC, Mabini Building, DepED Complex, Pasig City. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II, Instructions to Bidders, of the Bidding Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184 known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interests or outstanding capital stocks belonging to citizens of the Philippines as specified in Republic Act 5183. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II, Instruction to Bidders of the Bidding Documents.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting on **May 16, 2005** until **May 23, 2005** upon submission of a letter of intent to the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, 5th Floor, Mabini Building, DepED Complex, Pasig City, and payment of a non-refundable fee of **Philippine Pesos Four Thousand & 00/100 Only (Php4,000.00)**. Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.org. The BAC Secretariat could be reached through Tel. No. 636-6543 or Fax No. 636-6542.
5. The **DepED, BAC** shall hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **May 24, 2005**, 2:00 p.m. at the **Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepED Complex, Pasig City.**
6. Bids must be received on or before **June 6, 2005**, 10:00 a.m. at the **Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City**. Late Bids shall be rejected.
7. The **DepED, BAC** reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Undersecretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI - May 14 & 21, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills
Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBLITY AND TO BID
ITB No. GOP/05-DSWD-004

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), a national government agency, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), is inviting prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **JANITORIAL SERVICES REQUIREMENT OF DSWD.**

The Competitive Bidding procedures, pursuant to the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), shall be adopted in this undertaking.

The Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) is **Two Million Nine Hundred Eighty-one Thousand One Hundred Ninety-two Pesos and 82/100 (Php 2,981,192.82)** for the contract duration of six (6) months, covering July 1 to December 31, 2005.

Prospective bidders may obtain the complete set of bidding documents from the BAC Secretariat starting May 24, 2005 until June 10, 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00).

A **Pre-bid Conference** is scheduled at 9:00 am on June 2, 2005 at the 2nd Flr. Administrative Conference Room, Old Building DSWD Central Office.

Deadline for submission of eligibility requirements and bid proposals shall be at 2:00 pm on June 15, 2005 at the DSWD Administrative Conference Room. **Late bids will not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the **Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat**, 2nd Floor, DSWD Central Office, Constitution Hills, Quezon City with telefax no. 951-7116 or trunkline no. 931-8101 local 217.

DSWD hereby reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.

(SGD) RHODA F. YAP
Assistant Secretary and
BAC Chairperson

(PDI – May 21, 2005)

The Philippine eLibrary Project

THE PHILIPPINE e-Library Project, specifically, its online subscription to databases in the different branches of knowledge, has significantly boosts the content of the libraries in the UP System.

The balance choice of databases, from the multidisciplinary EBCSO academic package to the high-end iGroup databases in physics, chemistry, mathematics, IEEE computer source, ASTM standards, agriculture, to the more general reference materials as the Britannica Online and Xrefer Plus, no university library could be more happy and content. The Project came very timely; it was the time when the funds for collections development were dwindling because of the annual cut in the budget of the university. The fear of the inability to sustain the University Library's subscription to its online databases was relieved when the Philippine eLib databases were uploaded in the University websites. Science, engineering and technology faculty members, and university researchers, in particular, who long to have access to full text of highly scholarly scientific publications were most satisfied with the eLib collections. Through their librarians, they extend their gratitude to the eLib for making this project possible. This early, faculty members, graduate students and walk-in researchers are already inquiring on how they can have access of the databases in their homes.

The Philippine eLib Project is likewise instrumental in bringing to the world the invaluable Filipiniana special collections available in the five major members of the Project, namely: CHED, DA, DOST, NLP, and UP. Its Digitization component makes it possible to convert into digital format the members' existing collections and forthcoming ones because of the digitization equipment that each member would inherit from the Project.

Nothing of this kind of government Project has been launched and made operational within such a short period of one year. We congratulate the men and women, whose concerted effort, commitment and dedication proved that a Project of this kind and magnitude is possible in a government setting.

NEECO II

NUEVA ECIJA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Calipahan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija
Tel./Fax: 044-4111007
Email : neeco2@digitelone.com

INVITATION TO BID NO. NE II-DOE-EF-2005-001

The Department of Energy pursuant to Department Circular No. 95-11-009 under Energy Regulations No. 1-94 Implementing Section 5 (i) of Republic Act No. 7638, as amended and its attendant rules and procedures, has allocated from its Electrification Fund (EF) an amount to be made available to Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II) for the electrification projects in the province of Nueva Ecija as per Notice to Proceed No. EF 2002-633 dated May 14, 2002.

Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II) invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders for the construction of the following distribution lines:

Location	Kilometers of Line				Approved Budget
	20	10	U.B.	O.S.	
1. Brgy. Tibag, Talugtug	–	4.01	0.68	0.84	1,502,835.14
2. Brgy. Tandoc, Talugtug	–	2.10	1.27	1.37	957,748.88
3. Brgy. Sto. Domingo, Lupao	–	3.56	0.26	0.75	1,564,772.02
4. Brgy. Villa Boado, Talugtug	–	3.52	1.44	0.92	1,341,968.60
5. Brgy. Minule, Carranglan	8.09	0.90	7.08	0.97	4,030,005.08
6. Brgy. Caisitan, Talugtug	–	1.49	0.21	0.21	686,990.04
TOTAL	11.15	13.59	13.31	3.72	10,084,317.76

Only bids within the approved budget will be accepted, Bidders are also required to bid for the whole package only.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased, starting May 23, 2005 by eligible bidders upon submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00).**

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding document at the office of the PBAC, NEECO II, Calipahan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija, Tel. No. (044) 411-1007. Pre-bid Conference will be held on June 10, 2005, 9:00 A.M. at NEECO II Board Room also of the same address.

Sealed proposals in two (2) copies will be received by the PBAC at Plaza Leticia, Maharlika High Way, Cabanatuan City, at exactly 10 A.M., June 17, 2005 at which time and place of said proposal will be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's representative who choose to attend.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by A Bid Security equivalent to **TWO AND A HALF PERCENT (2.5%)** of the Bid Price.

NEECO II hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects therein, and accept the bid that is most advantageous to the Cooperative.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. REYGINO T. LAGASCA**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI-May 21 & 22, 2005)

NFA Daet deploys Palengke Watch Team

NATIONAL FOOD Authority provincial manager for Camarines Norte Edmundo V. Enrique (left) ordered the intensification of rice market monitoring in the province through its 'Palengke Watch Teams' to ensure the visibility and accessibility of NFA rice in the markets. The team sees to it that NFA accredited retailers make available NFA rice at P16 and P18 per kg for regular-milled (RMR) and well-milled rice (WMR) varieties, respectively. Presently, the NFA has 44 Bigasan sa Palengke (BSP) outlets in Daet exclusively selling NFA rice and 44 retailers Inside Markets selling NFA and commercial rice. Average daily sales in the province is placed at 700 bags.

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
THIRD ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT
Division of Zamboanga del Sur
Pagadian City

Bids and Awards Committee

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Package No. : ZDS-NCB-03-12-102

May 21, 2005

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*

2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following projects and its location to wit:

Type of Work	Project Location	PCAB Category	Pre-Bid Conference	Opening of Bid
Construction of 1 unit – 2 Storey, 6 CL School Building	Bayog CES, Bayog, ZDS	Medium Sub-Category "A" ARC	June 7, 2005 / 10:00 AM @ SDS Office	June 20, 2005 / 10:00 AM @ SDS Office

3. Bidding documents may be purchased at DepEd Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur with address at J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City for a nonrefundable fee of Php Three Thousand Five Hundred (P3,500.00) for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price, and shall be delivered to Division's Bids and Awards Commitee, Department of Education – Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur, J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City on or before 10:00 A.M./June 20, 2005 , at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

(Sgd.) **VIZMINDA G. SERRATO**
Chairperson
Division Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–May 21, 2005)

Real Estate Consultant seminar

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Realty Consultants & Specialists, Inc. (Parcs) in coordination with the Realty Service Practitioners' Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Realty Coop) will host a Consultant Seminar on May 21 & 28, from 8:00 to 5:30 p.m. at the Roces Function Room (former Sampaguita Room), Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan. Aimed to provide 16 hours of Continuing Education Program (CEP) to real estate practitioners (consultants/appraisers/brokers), the seminar features specific and technical subjects such as Market & Location Analysis; Selling Philippine Properties in the Global Market; Laws on Mortgage Loans & Foreclosures; Development of the Secondary Mortgage Market (Guaranty Operation/Securitization/Bond Floatation); Real Estate Investment Analysis; Project Development & Financing (Real Estate Development / Joint Venture); Disposition of Acquired Assets; Real Estate Consulting Practice in the Philippines (History, Public Practice, Standards & Ethics); Real Estate Cooperative Concept (Cooperative Housing/Marketing / Community Mortgage Program). The subjects will be given by distinguished and well-known real estate education experts from the industry.

For inquiries or information, please call/text Ning at 928-6517 / 0917-8862643. Assistance in the license processing and requirements will also be available during the seminar event.

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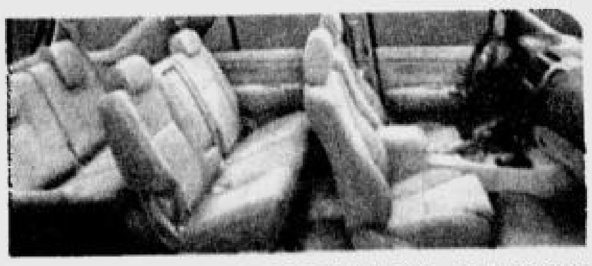

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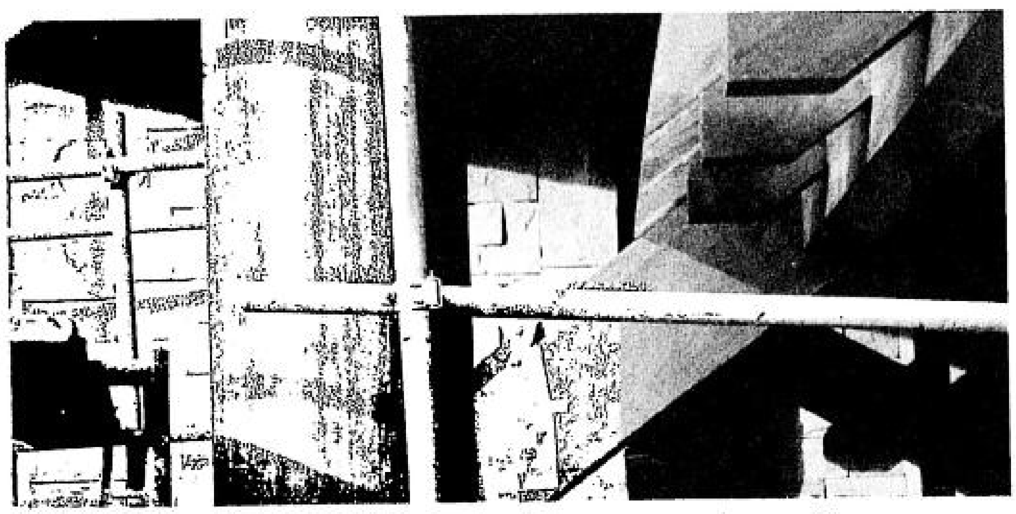


YREZABAL'S rattan can endure changes in temperature and weather conditions.

RATTAN cladded exterior columns

Furniture maker transforms smaller-diameter rattan poles

By Tessa R. Salazar

RATTAN is a climbing palm with its stems commonly bent or weaved into furniture.

Above-average diameter rattan poles 1 and ¼ inch diameter and above are popularly used to make furniture. This high demand, however, has resulted in the rapid depletion of higher diameter rattan poles.

Forced to use metal or wood

Rattan furniture makers lately have been forced to use metal or wood, thus pushing rattan furniture craftsmanship to the back shelves of commerce.

Eduardo R. Yrezabal, however, isn't someone to give up so easily on rattan.

Permacane project

In the late 1980s, Yrezabal embarked on his Permacane project that would later make his name synonymous to unique furniture designs in more than 32 countries. For five years, he researched on and developed a product using smaller diameter rattan poles and other "rattan rejects" using his Permacane.

Yrezabal describes Permacane as a product of a patented process that uses a system of enlarging ordinary rattan poles into a multilayered product fit for furniture manufacturing. Each laminated layer creates a sealant that makes it resistant to water and to stresses brought about by bending and shearing.

The multilayered poles, he said, is environment-friendly and also makes use of reject rattan poles and makes them superior in strength using his technology.

Permacane is able to form into sharp, stress-free curves and bends. It can also be painted or dyed with any desired finish and is adaptable and capable of unlimited diametrical expansion. The poles are not affected by changes in temperature and weather conditions, he said.

Upscale furniture pieces

Yrezabal's upscale furniture-cum-art pieces can be seen in Bloomingdale's of New York, hotels and beach resorts in the Caribbean, and even in a convention center in Dubai.

His furniture is also exported to Portugal, Spain, Korea, Macau, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, France and Japan.

Number of awards

Yrezabal has received a number of awards, including the Rising Star citation during the 1998 Golden Shell Awards and Best Product Collection at the Katha Awards.

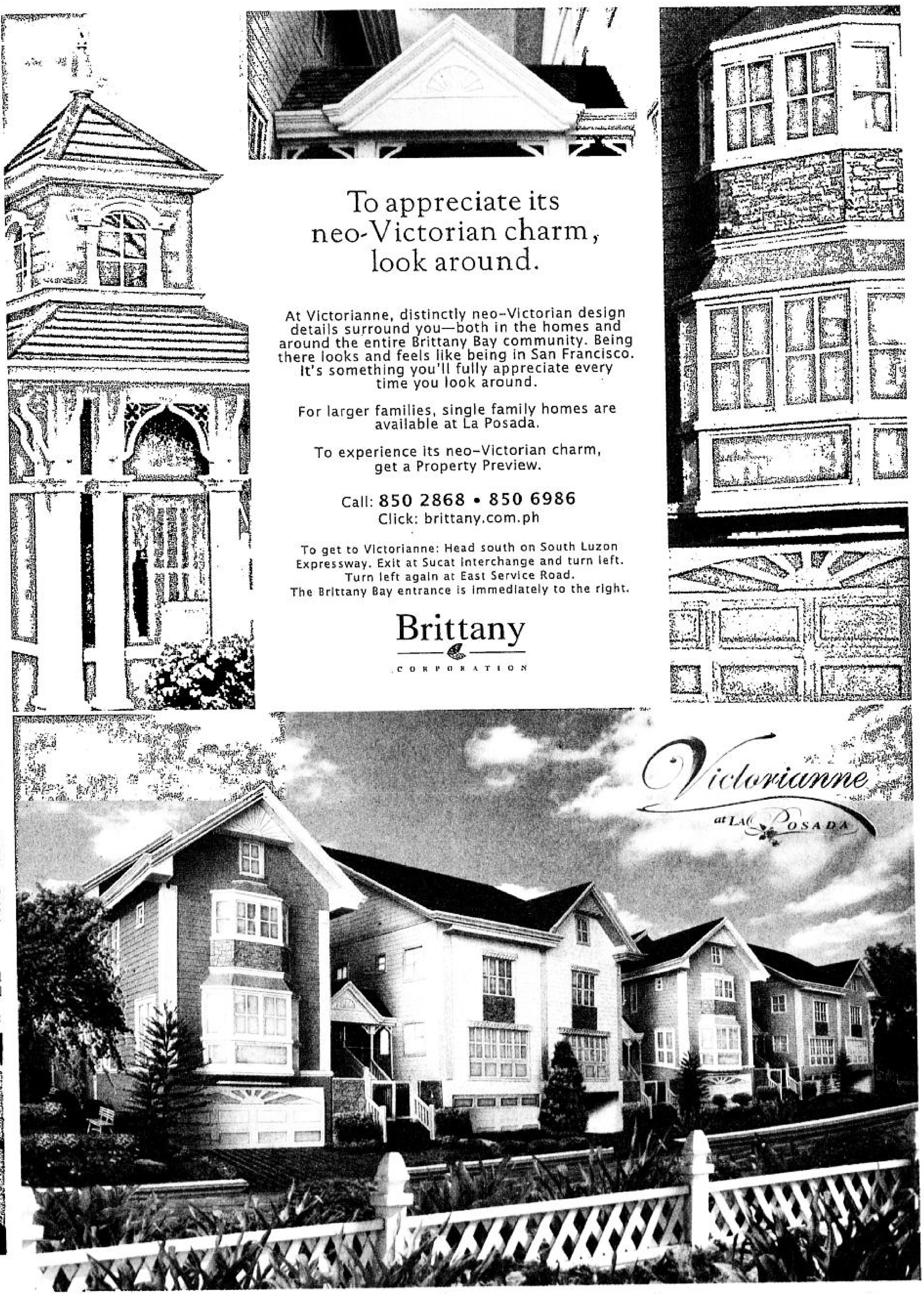
One of his original designs, the Natasha Club Chair, won the 2000 Adex Award given during the 2000 Design Journal Awards for Design Excellence in California.

Partnership

According to the Department of Science and Technology, the partnership between Yrezabal

FURNITURE/ B2

A CLOSER look at the endless possibility of rattan architecture.



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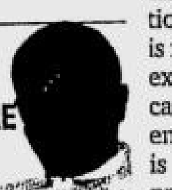
Green architecture and the efficient use of water

(Second of two parts)

LIVING ARCHITECTURE



Marcos de Guzman Jr.

GREEN buildings are sustainable buildings. They are built to have minimal impact on the environment particularly with regard to the use of natural resources.

In the case of water, green buildings use water efficiently by collecting, reusing and returning water back to the environment.

Landscape

At the height of the summer season, the landscape turns from a cool green to a dusty brown color, mainly due to the absence of precious water.

In some places, especially residential areas with huge manicured lawns, the garden remains green through the use of water sprinklers. This keeps the plants and the turf grass moist at a very high price. Watering lawns with treated or potable water is wasteful and energy inefficient.

Xeriscaping

Using water efficiently is a basic element in green building and development. By selecting the most appropriate type of plants and irrigation equipment, water waste can be minimized considerably. This trend of water conservation through creative landscaping is known as xeriscaping.

The term "xeriscaping" is derived from the Greek word xeros which means dry, merged with landscaping, thus xeriscaping. Note that it does not mean dry landscaping with rocks, cacti and scarce greenery.

Instead, the objective of a xeriscape is to create an attractive landscape using plants that are drought-resistant, well adapted to the local area and chosen for their water efficiency. A xeriscape on the average consumes less than half the water that a conventional landscape does. It also requires less maintenance than turf landscape.

Water reuse techniques

Each year thousands of liters of wastewater come from homes and workplaces. They are from sinks, showers and washing machines.

This wastewater can be easily reused so that only treated water can be used for cooking, drinking, bathing and cleaning. Water coming from these uses is called graywater, which can be used to flush toilets and water plants.

- **Graywater**

Graywater recycling can minimize the excessive use of fresh water. It is also an effective purification system. Since it is not dependent on expensive mechanical equipment, it is energy efficient. It is also a natural process that does not rely on expensive and toxic chemicals.

Graywater recycling consists of channeling water from sinks, showers and washing machines into a filter. The filter can be a concrete tank with sand at the upper half and gravel at the lower half. Water is coursed through the filter and flows by gravity to the underground cistern. From the cistern, water is then pumped directly to the toilet fixtures.

For an average family of 5 or 6, a cistern with a 1,000-gallon capacity should be adequate. It can also be mixed with rainwater that has been collected from the roof gutters. By using water from the cistern to flush the toilets, a large volume of water can be saved.

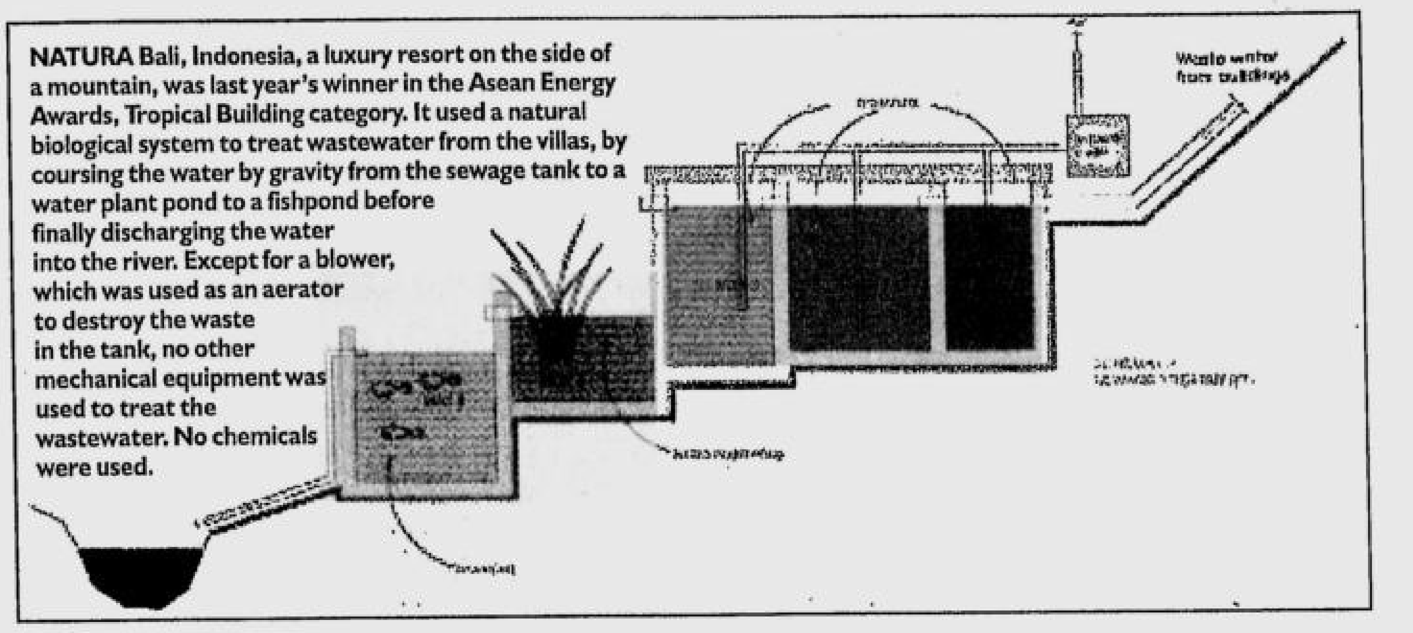
- **Blackwater**

Water that is discharged directly from toilets is called blackwater. This can also be recycled and is used mainly for irrigation.

Blackwater is processed in a similar manner, as graywater but additional treatment is required to purify the water. Recycling blackwater is a natural process that is now successfully adopted by many buildings.

Advantages

By recycling graywater and blackwater precious freshwater use will be much less. Another advantage is that the system will reduce the strain on septic tanks or treatment plants. Since no expensive mechanical equipment is required, less energy is used. No toxic chemicals are needed to recycle water, so the underground aquifer is recharged without contamination.



NATURA Bali, Indonesia, a luxury resort on the side of a mountain, was last year's winner in the Asean Energy Awards, Tropical Building category. It used a natural biological system to treat wastewater from the villas, by coursing the water by gravity from the sewage tank to a water plant pond to a fishpond before finally discharging the water into the river. Except for a blower, which was used as an aerator to destroy the waste in the tank, no other mechanical equipment was used to treat the wastewater. No chemicals were used.

Water management techniques

For green developments, responsible use of water is an increasingly significant environmental concern. As aquifers are depleted and groundwater continues to be contaminated, more and more developers are turning to green principles not only to address environmental concerns but also to derive financial benefits. (Aquifers are underground reservoirs.)

- **Storm water**

For most developments, storm water is something that must be removed from the site as quickly as possible. This is normally channeled through big concrete culverts that are very expensive. Green development relies on natural drainage systems that are beneficial to the environment and can cut substantial infrastructure costs. One example is the use of swales, an open type of natural drain with turf along the side of the road. By allowing water to be absorbed by the ground through the swale drainage system, storm water runoff will be reduced, decreasing chances of flooding.

Green development allows water to penetrate the ground to recharge aquifers. This means the minimal use of hardscapes such as concrete and asphalt pavements. Instead, light-colored pavement is preferred such as paving stones, which are precast cement blocks that allow rain to seep through.

Another natural way to drain water is to allow water runoff to collect in detention ponds.

- **Wetlands**

When rainwater falls in wooded and landscaped areas, the plants and the ground naturally absorb it, and the rest evaporates. In urban areas, however, most of the rainwater falls on nonporous surfaces like concrete and asphalt surfaces. Eventually they end up as stormwater runoff. Storm water runoff is untreated and unfiltered water that has flowed over concrete roads, driveways and roofs reaching streams, lakes and oceans.

As rainwater pours down concrete pavements and roads, dirt, engine oil and other chemicals are washed down into natural bodies of water, such as underground water reservoirs. These unnatural elements mixed with rainwater are a major cause of our water contamination and damage to our aquatic life.

The answer to this problem is wetlands, whether they are natural or manmade. Wetlands are areas that are filled with water the whole year round. Marshes, swamps and creeks are wetlands.

Wetlands are integrated with the landscape and they help reduce the amount of stormwater runoff at the same time removing its harmful elements. They reduce flooding by storing stormwater and gradually releasing it back to natural waterways. Stabilizing soil also prevents erosion. They also protect fish and other wildlife.

With wetlands, the urban heat island effect is lessened, a major contributor to global warming. The term "urban heat island" refers to the effect of sunlight on nonporous surfaces like roads, rooftops and parking lots as it radiates heat back into the atmosphere increasing the temperature in the area. In simple terms, it can be compared to an island giving off intense heat amid cooler surroundings.

Many people find wetlands more appealing than concrete drainage systems. This is a major reason green developers are adopting the system to address flooding and other water problems in their communities.

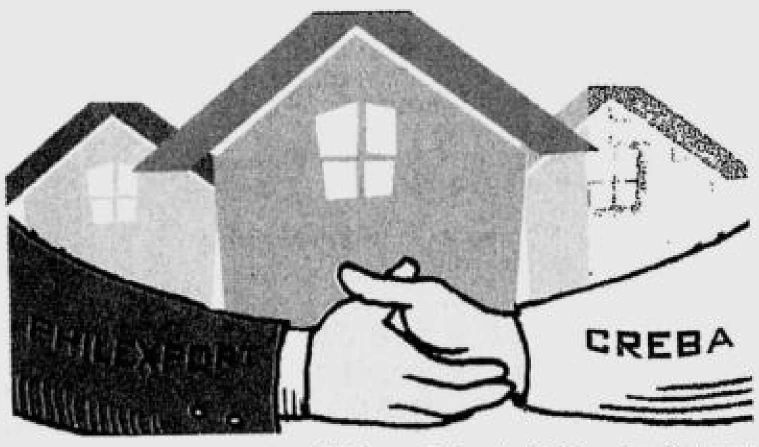
Conclusion

Whatever measures and systems we adopt to conserve our water, it's time we seriously considered the implications of the present water crisis. Green architecture principles can address some of these problems.

On a long-term basis, however, we all must contribute by changing our present lifestyle based on excessive use and abuse of this finite resource.

(The author is vice chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards and is a practicing green architect. For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.)

Creba ties up with Philexport in employees' housing projects



THE PHILIPPINE Exporters Confederation of the Philippines (Philexport) and the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) have joined hands to assist employees of Philexport members in acquiring housing loans from the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund).

Philexport president Sergio Ortiz Luis Jr., who is concurrently president of the Export-Import Bank, and Creba executive vice president Rosemarie C. Basa signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) on the arrangements.

Pag-Ibig Fund loans are available for socialized and medium housing units from P225,000 house-and-lot packages up to the maximum of P2 million based on the affordability of the applicant employees.

Basa said Creba will provide technical services, including matching interested companies with reliable developers who are Creba members. The arrangements may either be on a joint-venture basis or other forms of collaboration.

Philexport has sent out circulars to its member-companies which number about 4,500 and the response has been favorable.

Pump-primer

In their MOA, both Philexport and Creba recognized that real estate development is a pump-primer of the national economy and provides employment opportunities and helps 52 industries engaged in other fields or businesses. The MOA is principally aimed at providing homes to employees still paying rent on their dwellings and second homes for those interested in acquiring property as investments or for business.

Creba is holding its first-ever Creba Expo 2005 at the World Trade Center on July 27-30. It is aimed at gathering developers, local and foreign investors and suppliers, home financing institutions, especially the Pag-Ibig Fund and private banks and the public, especially families striving to acquire homes and other types of real estate property. Expo theme is "Our World under One Roof."

Housing conference

On July 28-29 at the adjacent Philippine Trade Training Center, the Creba Social Housing Foundation Inc., the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council will sponsor a housing conference on the theme "100 Bahay Bawat Lunsod at Munisipyo at Pribadong Sector" to prod LGUs to start building housing projects for their constituents.

Vice President Noli de Castro, HUDCC chair, and Local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes will head speakers at the gathering of governors, city and municipal mayors who will be briefed on current information and guidelines on housing financing facilities.

Job fair

A conference feature, said overall conference chair Florencio Ofrecio, is a job fair where some 30 private companies will offer openings to applicants. It is expected to attract thousands of applicants.

The conference livelihood component will be addressed by officials of the Training and Livelihood Research Center, People's Credit and Finance Corp., Land Bank of the Philippines and Quedancor.

Furniture maker . . .

From page B1

and the DOST's Technology Application and Promotion Institute has resulted in the patenting of the Permacane process and the procurement of the cutting tools necessary for this process.

DOST has said the company's American branch, Permacane Yrezabal-USA, already has 16 showrooms all over the United States, including branches in Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston and Houston.

Permacane materials could also be found in upscale projects such as Hyatt Villas in Clark Airfield, Canyon Woods in Batangas, and in Malacañang Palace. He was commissioned to do furniture pieces for Pope John Paul II during the 1995 World Youth Day in the Philippines.

Permaclad

Yrezabal stresses his furniture success story is not new. What he's more excited about right now is what he calls the Permaclad.

This time, he's using rattan for columns and architectural structures. Smaller-diameter rattan done in the Permaclad process is now being used to make false beams, rafters, ceilings, walls, ballisters, and railing curves.

"Rattan can replace wood because rattan could be bent in such a way that wood cannot," he said. "And we've proven it. We're doing a lot of work with Locsin and Partners and other architects," he added.

Pointing to a set of stair railings he had done, he quipped: "You wouldn't see any mark in the whole stairs anymore. If you don't tell people that these stairs were made of rattan, they would think these were (made of) wood."

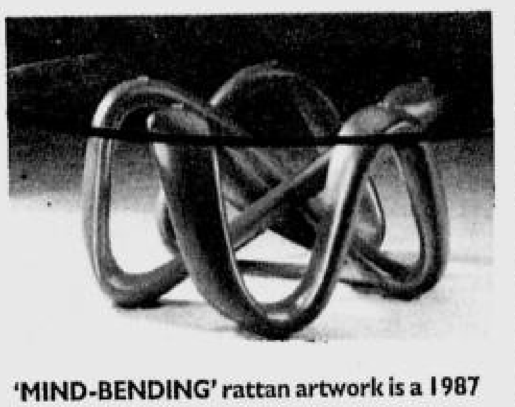
"It's the only material that does what it does. The rattan fiber doesn't move. With rattan, (you never have to) check for moisture content because it doesn't move," he said.

Environmental concern

Yrezabal observed from the start that rattan was not a major forest product, and took only approximately five years to cultivate it. Unlike forest trees, which take 50 years to mature, rattan is considered a "minor forest product" and a "secondary timber."

He also proudly declared that he produces "zero waste" when using smaller diameter rattan. His utilization of materials is said to be 97 percent.

"We don't throw rattan away," he said.



'MIND-BENDING' rattan artwork is a 1987 sculpture coffee table.

And if wood is prone to *bukbok* as well as termites, his rattan is not. "Rattan segments are thin, we can immerse them in Solignum, which is easily absorbed," he said.

Yrezabal said that with his products, architects are no longer limited to the materials and designs that they want to use.

"If they ask me how long I can do a rail, I say 100 meters without any *dugtong* (attachments). I can do it a thousand feet without *dugtong*, or even more," he said.

Yrezabal hopes that if his products continue its rise in demand and popularity, then the rattan industry can be brought back to its old glory.

SHDA urges building 650,000 new homes yearly

PRESIDENT Marilu M. Alferez and Board Chair Bansan C. Choa of the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association yesterday underscored the urgency of continuing collaboration among the government, the private sector and home beneficiaries to address the country's growing housing backlog of some 3.7 to 4 million dwelling units.

In coordination with the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chaired by Vice President Noli de Castro, SHDA will hold its annual national convention on July 28-29 in Bacolod City. The SHDA is the country's largest and leading organization of subdivision and housing developers. It is expected to gather all participants in the housing industry to keep them updated on various issues, concerns and developments.

Required new units

With the country's population increasing at an average of 2.4 percent yearly, some 650,000 new units annually will be required to satisfy the overall housing needs, Alferez said. She is the vice president and general manager of Robinsons Homes Corp., while Choa is chair of Confed Properties Inc.

The housing backlog, Choa stressed, "accounts for the difference between housing production for the government and the private sector compared to the overall housing gap through innovative and comprehensive programs."

Housing finance

Alferez underscored the need for prioritizing sustainable sources of housing finance for both developers and endusers, the evolution of a secondary mortgage market system, and further encouraging the participation of private financial institutions, particularly the private banks, in housing development.

SHDA first vice president and convention chair Willie Uy, who is chair of the Phinma Property Holdings Corp., said that among the housing industry's major concerns to be discussed at the convention is the simplification and fast-tracking of rules and regulations regarding permitting and licensing process in housing. "This will generally hasten production and add as incentive to private housing developers and investors," said Uy.

Convention co-chair Roy Calleja stressed that housing development is a major industry that can be utilized as an economic prime-priming instrument. Citing studies placing the multiplier effect of housing on national economic development at some 16.7 percent, Calleja said there are at least seven to 10 manpower requirements in building a house and at least some 60 direct industries involved to the construction of housing projects.

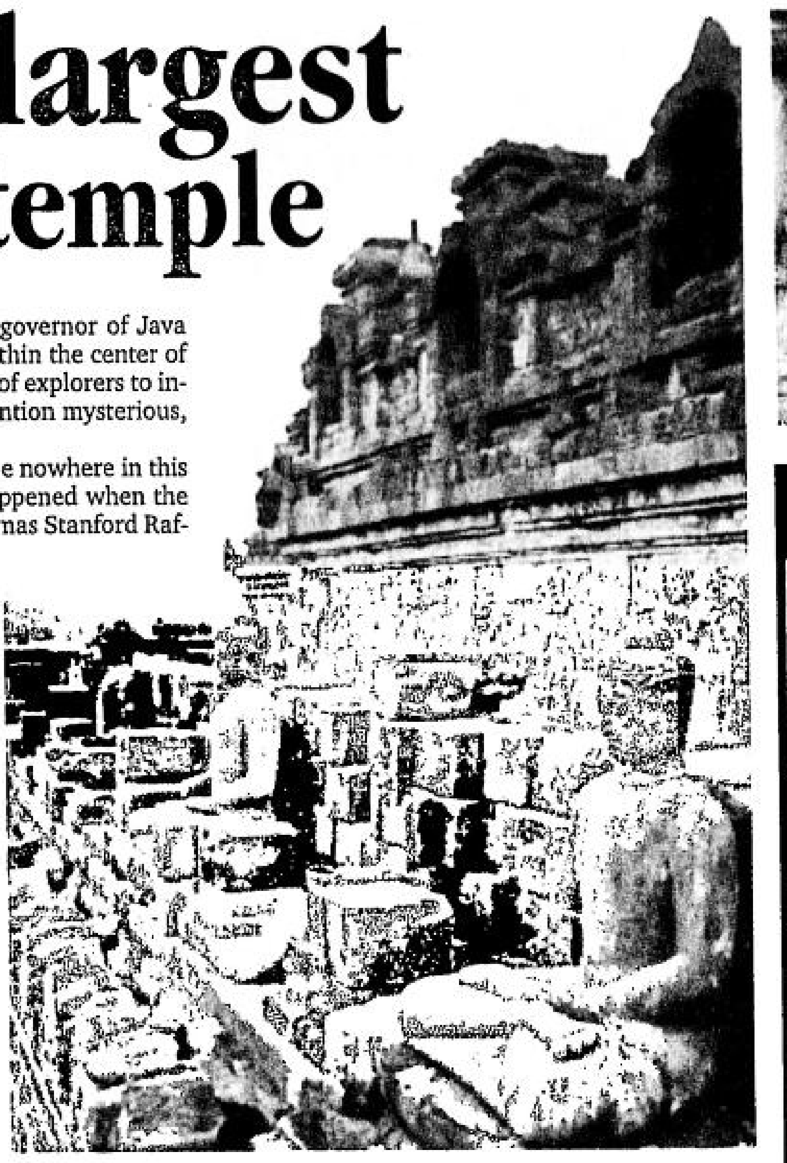
CHOA

ALFEREZ

World's largest Buddhist temple

RUMORS reached the British lieutenant governor of Java about an ancient temple buried deep within the center of the island. Intrigued, he ordered a team of explorers to investigate. Weeks later, a magnificent, not to mention mysterious, historical shrine was unveiled.

No, no, Lara Croft nor Indiana Jones would be nowhere in this story. The above account was what actually happened when the Borobudur Temple was rediscovered by Sir Thomas Stanford Raffles.



AMAZING STRUCTURES

Impressive monument

In 1814, the British lieutenant governor of Java sent a survey team to verify reports of an impressive monument located at the center of the island of Java. For six weeks, a crew of 200 men labored to clear away the soil, volcanic ash and vegetation that buried the said sanctuary, unearthing what turned out to be one of the greatest archeological finds of the modern era.

The largest Buddhist temple in the world, the Borobudur Temple can be found near Yogyakarta, Central Java, Indonesia. Built between 750 and 842 AD by Sanmaratungga, it measures 60,000 cubic meters with a height of 34.5 meters and a base measuring 123 meters by 123 meters. The shrine was constructed in three layers: a pyramidal base with five concentric square terraces, the trunk of a cone with three round platforms and a towering stupa or a bell-shaped chamber.

It has a total of 1,460 panels with each panel measuring 2 meters wide. The temple teems with relief, with 1,212 panels with narrative carvings. The Buddha statues total to 504, intact or otherwise, according to research.

Once the main site

The Borobudur was once the main site for Buddhist pilgrimage and for more than a century after it was completed it was the most significant Buddhist temple in the world. However, this changed when political and religious power moved away from the region after the end of the Mataram dynasty. Raffles brought the Borobudur back to the spotlight after centuries of neglect, launching a massive cleanup and restoration project.

One can just imagine how taxing it was to salvage the Borobudur. One account described how a large section of the temple was dismantled and rebuilt. Workers had to remove a million individual stone blocks, catalogue these on a computer, clean, then put these blocks back in the exact same order. How's that for restoration work?

The Borobudur Temple is one of the seven wonders of the world and the last restoration work was done from 1973 to 1983 with the help of Unesco. *Dianne M. Villafuerte*

THE SANCTUARY teems with 1,212 panels adorned with narrative carvings and the buddha statues total to 504, according to research.

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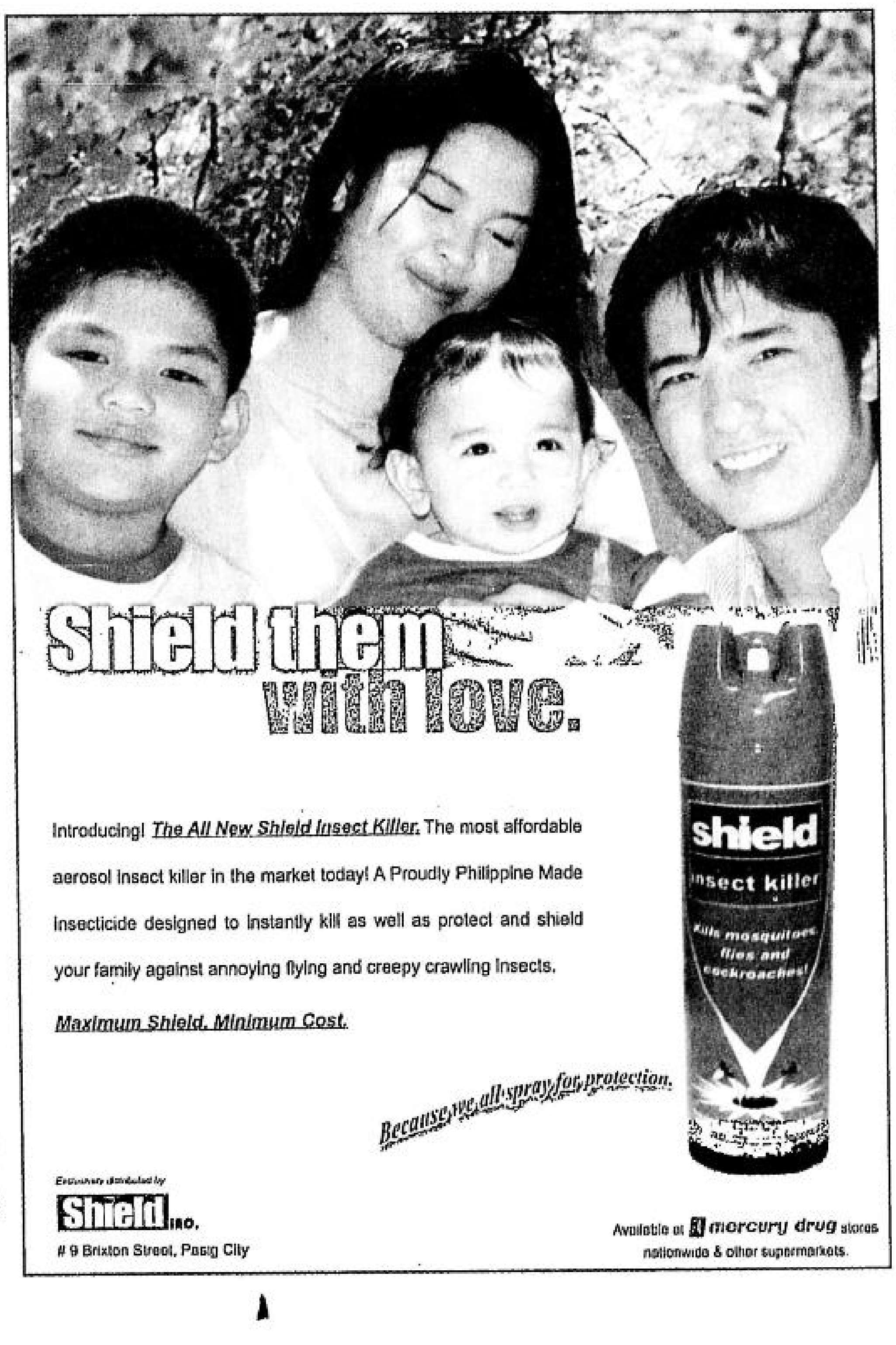
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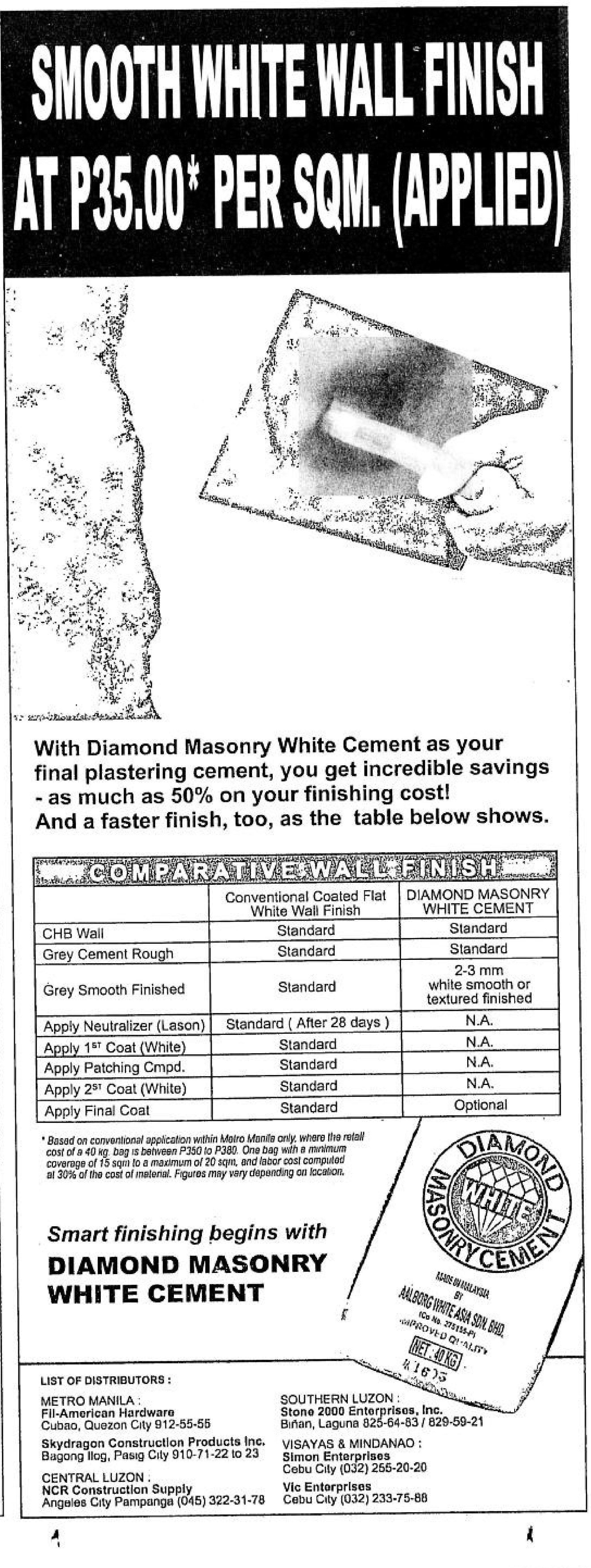

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Grey Cement Rough	Standard	Standard
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Apply 1ST Coat (White)	Standard	N.A.
Apply Patching Cmpd.	Standard	N.A.
Apply 2ST Coat (White)	Standard	N.A.
Apply Final Coat	Standard	Optional

** Based on conventional application within Metro Manila only, where the retail cost of a 40 kg. bag is between P350 to P380. One bag with a minimum coverage of 15 sqm to a maximum of 20 sqm, and labor cost computed at 30% of the cost of material. Figures may vary depending on location.*

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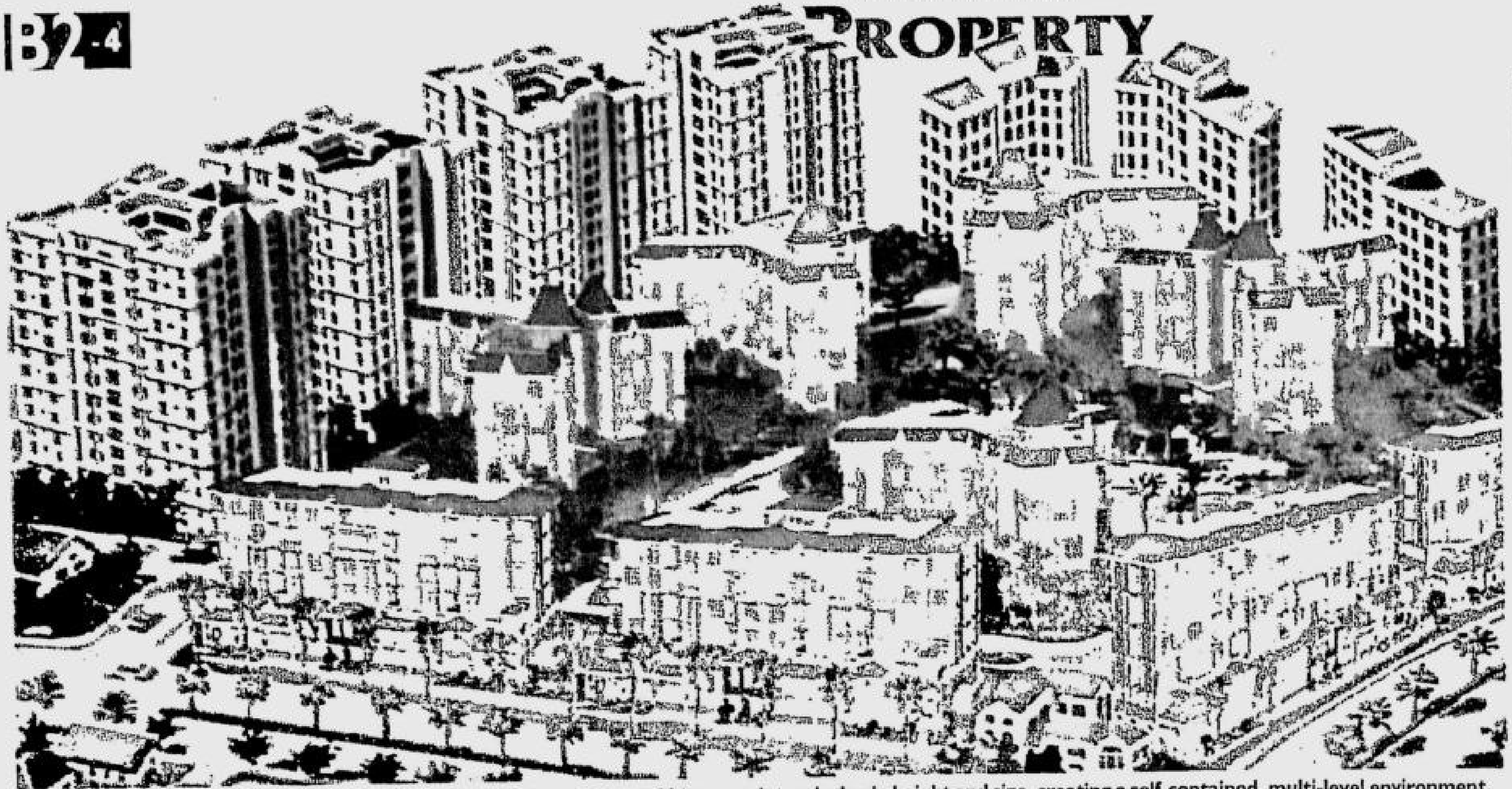


CROWN ASIA develops a "city by the bay" with Presidio's symphony of 16 towers interplaying in height and size, creating a self-contained, multi-level environment.

Presidio: Crown Asia's first vertical community to redefine living

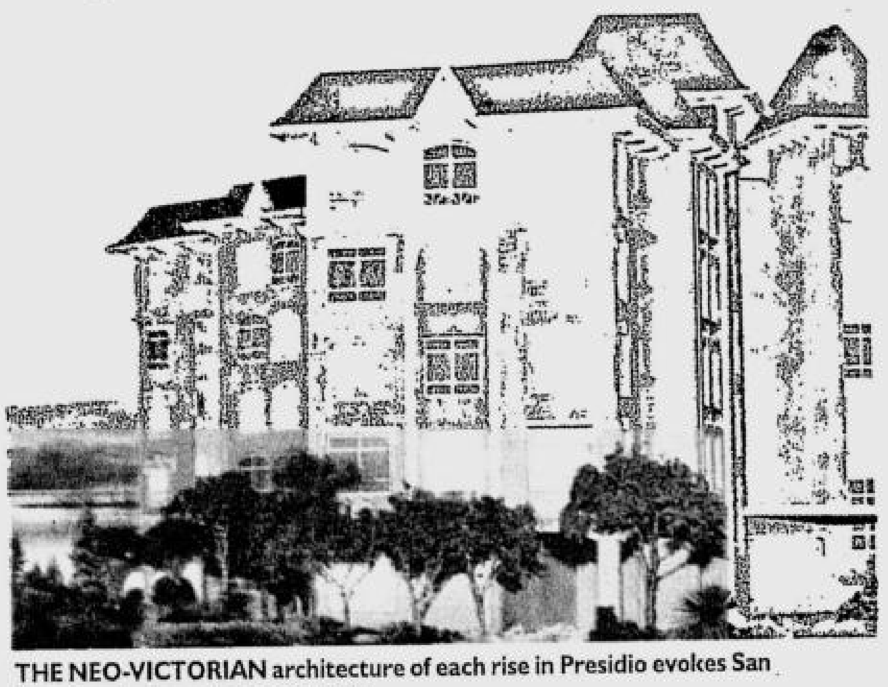
FOR THE ACTIVE urbanite who painstakingly labored for each enjoyed luxury, finding a charming and comfortable home which suits their fast-paced metropolis lifestyle while unpolluted environs and cultured social upbringing surround their children, is a dream to complement the achievements in their career and family life.

Crown Asia, backed with 10 years of unwavering track record for creating prime residential communities in the country from North to South, once again proves its title as the 2004 Top Real Estate Company of the Year as it redefine urban living with its first vertical community of low- and mid-rise condominiums—Presidio at Brittany Bay.

The features of Presidio's master-planned community start with its enviable backdrop of Laguna de Bay and strategic location at the boundary of bustling Sucat and thriving city of Taguig. Business districts and leisure destinations are a stone throw's away with Presidio's convenient location—the community is only 5 minutes away from Alabang, 15 minutes from Naia, 20 minutes from Makati and Global City, and a mere 30-minute drive from Ortigas; via South Super Highway and C5. Upcoming infrastructure developments such as the extension of the skyway going to Alabang and Coastal Road/C-6 construction along Laguna de Bay, will cut travel time by half, while travel from Caloocan to Alabang will be reduced to 30 minutes with the rehabilitation and modernization of the South Metro Rail Transit System.

Symphony of 16 towers

Presidio is a symphony of 16 towers interplaying in height and size, creating a self-contained, multilevel environment complemented by a splendid view of the Sierra Madre Mountains and refreshing breeze of Laguna de Bay.



THE NEO-VICTORIAN architecture of each rise in Presidio evokes San Francisco's charming design style.

Inspired by San Francisco's Neo-Victorian architecture, the design influences of each tower is distinguished with the use of the most recognizable bay windows, along with towers, balconies and space maximized with thoughtful planning. The use of stunning gable turrets, shingled roofs, towers, balconies and intricate latticework completes the reinterpretation of San Francisco's charming design style.

5 model towers

A 6.8-hectare "city by the bay," Presidio caters to progressive urban living with its mixture of commercial and residential condominiums starting with five model towers to choose from:

- **Da Vinci Tower.** A comfortable, charming mixed-use condo with creative space utilization, the Da Vinci Tower is suited for professional singles of young families. Commercial areas occupy the ground level of the five-story condo, with two models units available in 42 square meters and 56-sq-m floor area priced at P1.8 million and P2.6 million, respectively; or one can choose to combine two or more adjacent units.
- **Picasso Tower.** A prestigious garden condo residence with highlights such as walkways left open to cool air and surrounded by lush greens. The garden-inspired Picasso Tower, is a three-winged seven-story rise with model units available in 39-sq-m floor area with one bedroom and 51 sq m with two bedrooms. Prices range from P1.7 to P2.3 million.
- **Michelangelo Tower.** A 10-story versatile garden condo rise, the Michelangelo Tower offers the largest selection of model units: the typical model units suited for independent individuals, ranging from 28- to 39-sq-m floor area with one bedroom; the loft-type or bilevel units provided with elegant floor design and garden units, ranging from 50 to 68 sq m available in one-three bedroom cuts; and the penthouse units equipped with expansive living space, ranging from 55- to 75-sq-m floor area with one-two bedrooms. Prices range from P1.4 to P5 million.

Completing this "city by the bay" are the Rembrandt Tower, another mixed-use condo of ingenious design and architecture; and the Monet Tower, the tallest among the y-shaped garden condo rise found in the heart of the development. The Monet's three-winged 12-story structure offers the best vista of the bay and mountains.

With the growing list of career-driven urbanites and families dreaming of a themed home and comfortable lifestyle, the first four towers of Presidio have already been sold out in a year. At present Crown Asia is already selling its fifth tower, the Monet.

Town and village centers

A town center will house commercial establishments, bringing choice shops and restaurants in the backyards of Presidio residents. Athletic and leisure facilities are only a few steps away from your home. A village center for Presidio residents will have a swimming pool, clubhouse, day care center, game room, multi-purpose sports center, and gym.

Setting Presidio apart from other space-deprived condominiums is the presence of lavish, landscaped courtyards, parks and playgrounds, and wide sidewalks ideal for jogging while breathing in fresh breeze from Laguna de Bay or gazing at the beautiful view of the mountains.

Guiding the thoughtful and effective master-planning of Crown Asia's every project are the five core values they persistently adhere to: greenery, security, choices, serenity and attainability.

Visit Presidio to experience the luxury of city living by the lake. Property previews may be arranged by calling Crown Asia at 718-3400 or 718-3402.

Construction industry getting better every time

AMONG THE SECTORS considered to experience a boom this year is the construction industry, what with its noteworthy performance last year. According to data from the National Statistical Coordination Board, the construction output, as measured by the Gross Value Added (GVA) in construction, posted an astounding rate of 8.9 percent in 2004 as compared to the previous year's 2.6 percent.

Investments in the construction industry, on the other hand, as measured by the Gross Value in Construction (GVC), achieved a 6.2 percent increase in demand from a low of 2.9 percent in 2003, due to an upsurge in construction demand in both the public and private sectors.

Rosy performance

The construction industry's rosy performance last year signals the impending arrival of a much-expected boom in said industry, where output is seen to grow between 4.8 and 5.8 percent next year, citing a rapidly recovering investment climate and increased housing construction.

Likewise, the annual growth curve of construction output is also expected to rise in the next six years with a growth of between 10.5 and 11.5 percent. Construction investments are also projected to increase in the range of 5.1-5.5 percent this year due to increased participation of the private sector in construction. Lastly, annual average growth for the industry in the next six years is projected to be somewhere between 11 and 11.9 percent.

Trade exhibit

Due to these encouraging figures, the construction industry is again well on its way to becoming one of the best performing industries in the years to come. And what may well serve as a fitting recognition to its success is the 13th staging of Construction Show Cebu, regarded as the biggest and the longest running construction trade exhibit in the Southern Philippines.

After more than a decade of building business networks in the construction industry in the south by showcasing innovations and expertise, the four-day exhibit, which typically happens every first Friday of June, is expected to gather over 100 company exhibitors composed of market leaders and big hardware stores. With over 500 global brands represented—from concrete panels, flooring systems, to cement and plastering products and water heating technology and other innovative products and solutions—the exhibitors will go all out as they present their products and services to over 40,000 visitors and guests this year who will troop to the Cebu Trade Hall at the third level of SM City Cebu.

Other highlights

Aside from the innovative products and services, other interesting highlights of the 13th Construction Show Cebu would be discount offerings on selected products, which will be extended during the four-day exhibit, in close cooperation with Hardware Consolidated Inc.

A major factor of the success of the 13th Construction Show Cebu is its organizer, L.A. Ducut and Co. Inc., the event organizer of the annual exhibit for the last 12 years. Lilibeth A. Ducut-Abais, managing director of L.A. Ducut and Co. Inc., said their quest for an attractive mix of innovations and expertise among more than a thousand suppliers of construction materials and technology contributed to the show's success. Said Ducut-Abais: "With our early 100 percent bookings by our exhibitors for this year's exhibit, it indicates that the 13th Construction Show Cebu is an effective marketing strategy of reaching their target market in the Southern Philippines. It enjoys the growing popularity of being the launching pad of numerous global and local brands of construction products and technology."

Right mix of product lineup

Ducut-Abais added that they will continue to satisfy trade visitors and consumers with the right mix of product and technology lineup. "We will always exert our best efforts to be selective in terms of setting certain criteria for the merchandise mix. At the 13th Construction Show Cebu, we practically cover everything trade buyers and consumers need for their construction demands they would never really ask for more."

The 13th Construction Show Cebu will be held on June 3-6 at the Cebu Trade Hall located at the 3rd floor of SM City Cebu. Exhibit doors open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Major sponsors include Cemex Philippines, makers of the innovative Cemex Palitada King; and Admix, a technological breakthrough in job-site concrete mixes and the INQUIRER.

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Quality from Henkel

Storage spaces need attention, too

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

I ALWAYS say that a house can't be considered a real home if clutter is nowhere to be found. Clutter gives a house or a room its homey feel. (But then again, I may just be justifying my one big mess of a room.)

Some of us are obsessed with keeping our homes clutter-free—or at least, keeping clutter hidden, invisible, out of sight. Be it a middle-class house or a studio-type unit, we're always thinking of installing this shelf or that cabinet where we can stack away books, CDs, DVDs, papers and everything else imaginable that litters the home.

What we are not aware of, though, is that some our storage solutions may be giving good feng shui a hard time to circulate within our homes. Believe it or not, even storage spaces contribute to the creation of favorable energy in our living environment.

FENG SHUI

Guidelines

Feng shui consultant and writer Stephanie Roberts shares with us some guidelines for our indispensable storage spaces:

- Spaces which are completely crammed suppress chi (energy) to flow freely into your home and, consequently, your life. According to Roberts, full file drawers constrain the flow of new business; full bookcases block the flow of new information and knowledge; and a full bedroom closet hinders the formation of new relationship. (I am simply amazed at how feng shui is able to relate everything to everything!)

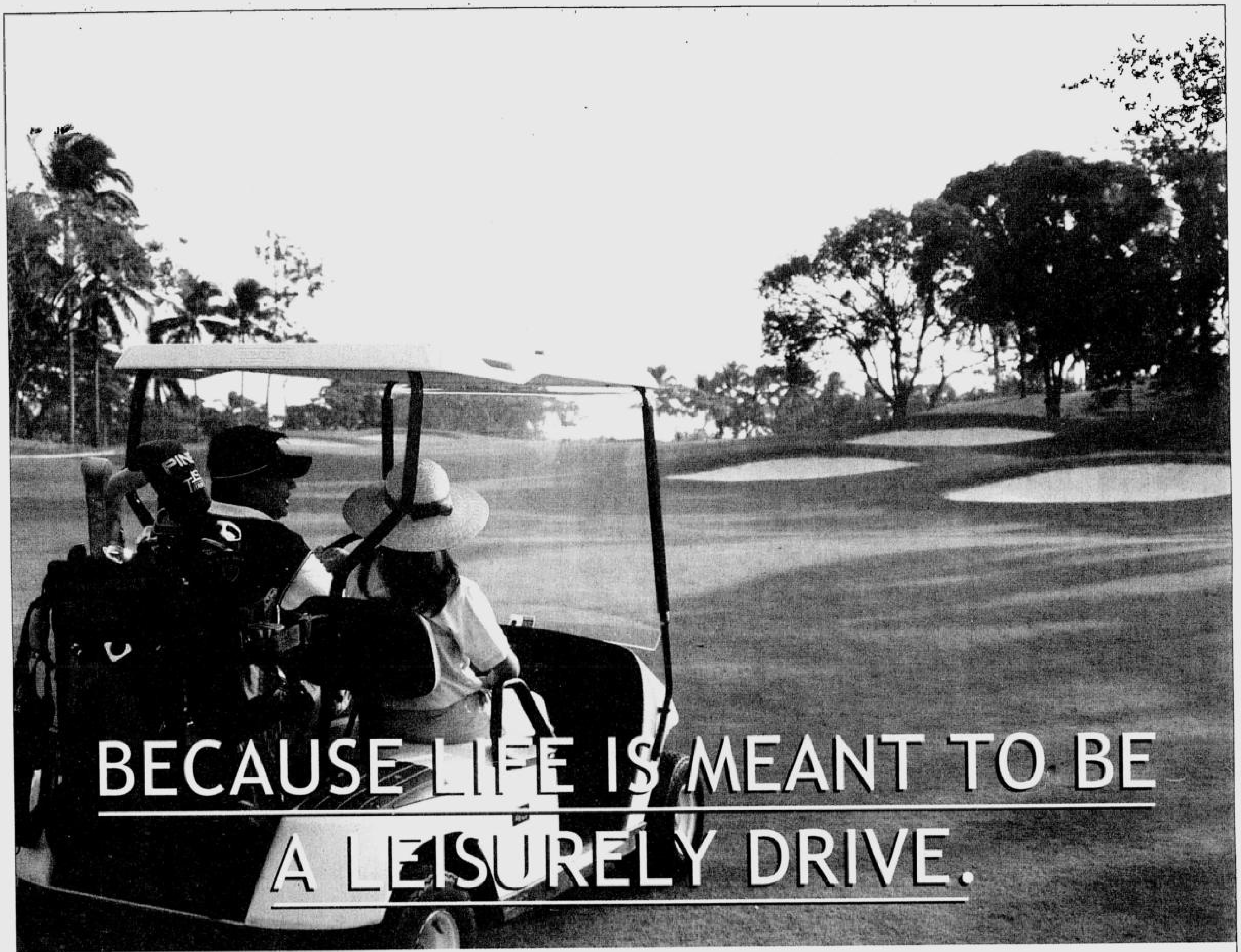
It is best therefore to leave one-fourth of your storage spaces free to symbolize extra room for new opportunities, knowledge and relationships.

- Storage units, which hang from the ceiling, give off an oppressive energy which causes feelings of depression and anxiety. It also presses down on whatever is located under it. It is considered especially unlucky to hang pots and pans over the stove because, according to feng shui theory, this weighs down one's finances.

Shelves installed above the door or on the wall beside the desk or bed creates the same oppressive effect and may cause headaches, poor sleep, lack of energy and muddled thinking, Roberts writes.

- Vinyl-coated wire shelves on the inside of a door are advisable for holding small items provided that these are only installed on closet, cabinet or pantry doors.
- The space under your bed should never be turned into a storage space, especially for books, sharp objects and exercise equipment. This may cause you to

STORAGE/ B3-2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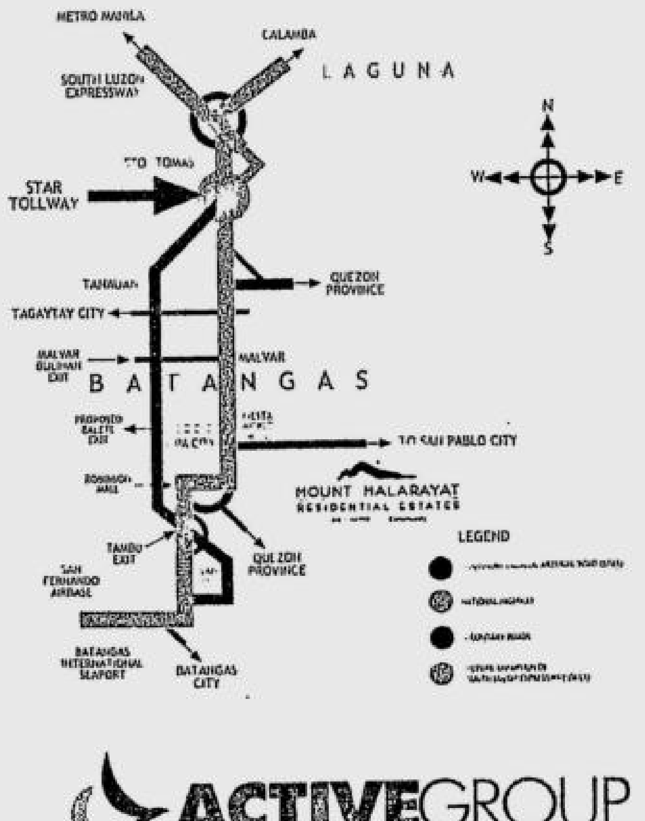
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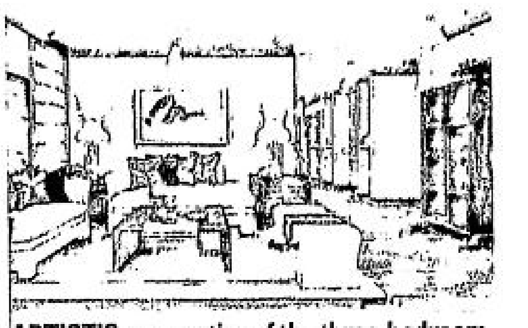
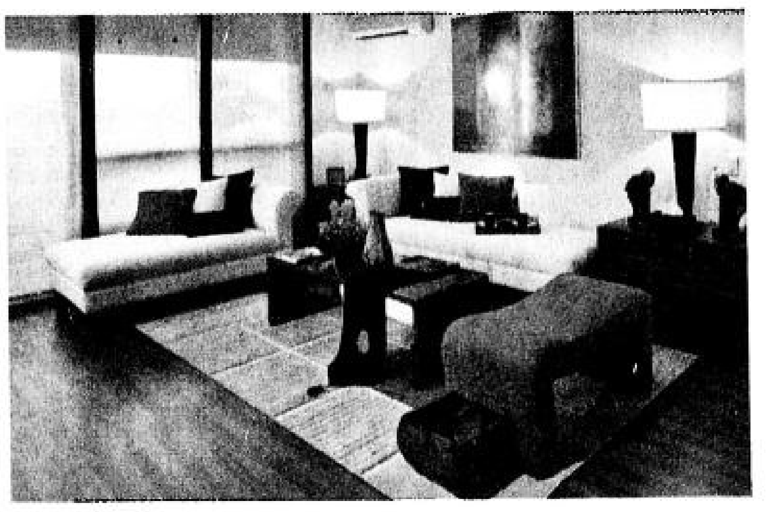
Ayala Land launches second tower of The Residences at Greenbelt

ASIAN modernist sensibility is the design theme for the two-bedroom model unit of the new San Lorenzo Tower at The Residences at Greenbelt.


ARTIST'S perspective of the three-bedroom model unit.

THE RESIDENCES at Greenbelt

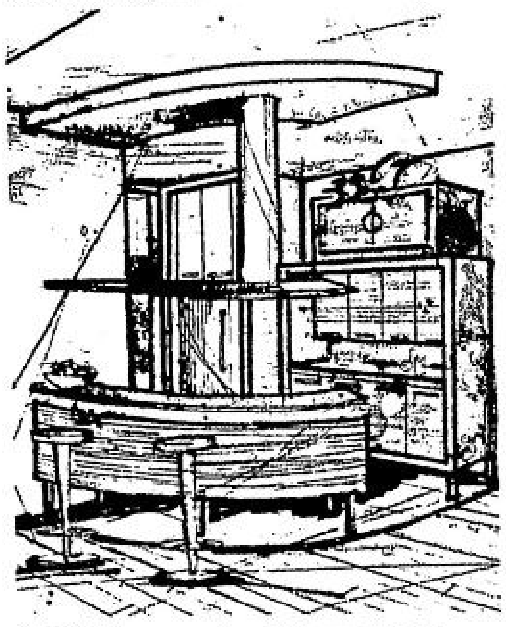

EASTERN-INSPIRED antiques and decors mixed with western design are emphasized in the three-bedroom model unit of the new San Lorenzo Tower.

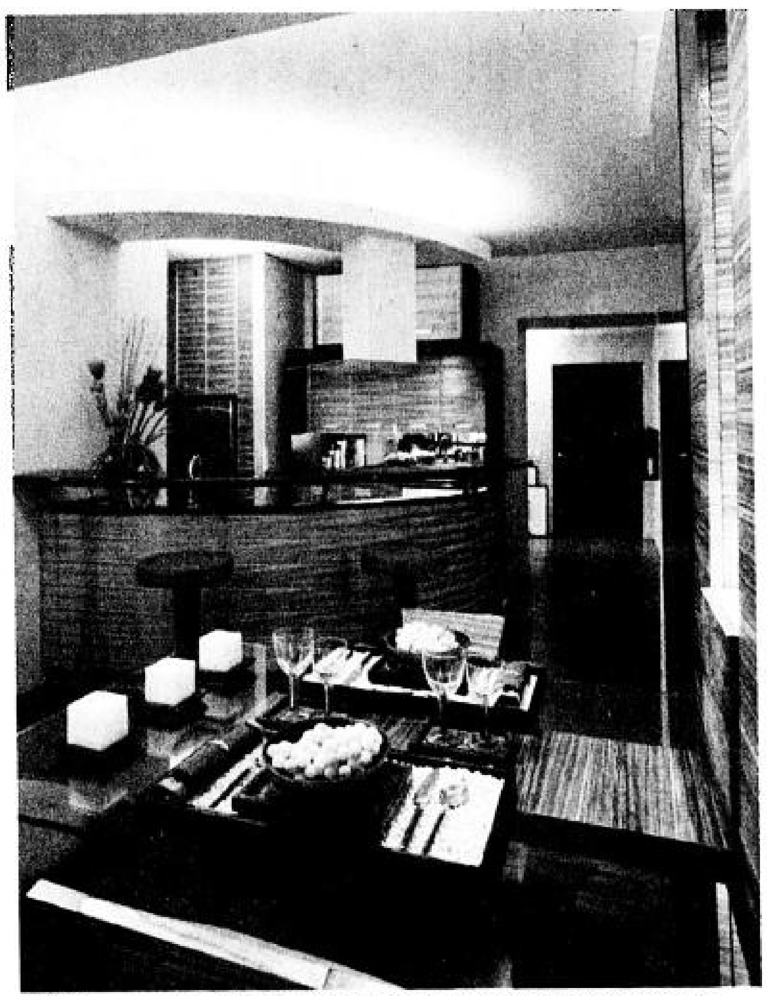
THE COUNTRY'S premiere real estate developer ushers in yet another milestone development with the tallest building in Makati.

Another masterpiece in real estate development will soon tower over Makati's skyline as Ayala Land Inc., the country's leader in real estate development, launches The San Lorenzo Tower, the second tower of The Residences at Greenbelt.

The new San Lorenzo Tower sets yet another standard in cosmopolitan living as it offers the ultimate in luxury, design and location. Completely integrated within the Greenbelt Mall and Lifestyle Center and literally a few steps away from the Makati Central Business District, the new tower gives residents maximum convenience, as it is connected via a bridgeway to Greenbelt's myriad selection of restaurants, lifestyle shops, and commercial and business establishments. What's more, there will be retail establishments at the ground floor level of The Residences at Greenbelt which are part of and fully integrated with the Greenbelt Lifestyle Center.

"Following the success of the first tower, Ayala Land once again introduces another milestone development with the new San Lorenzo Tower," says Ayala Land senior vice president Angie Lacson. "Similar to the Laguna Tower, the San Lorenzo Tower is located right at the heart of Greenbelt, so residents enjoy exclusivity while being in the center of the Greenbelt lifestyle. This time though, buyers of the new tower can enjoy more choices in terms of unit types and sizes. Our masterfully designed units also offer breathtaking views of the surrounding areas throughout the building."


ARTIST'S perspective of the special one-bedroom model unit.


SAN Lorenzo Tower's special one-bedroom model unit features a home studio ambiance.

Masterfully planned

With units designed by some of the country's foremost masters, the new San Lorenzo unit boasts of 57 floors, making it the tallest building in Makati. The building layout was carefully planned in such a way that each unit is afforded spectacular, unobstructed views of Makati and its surrounding environment. No other residential development offers such an excellent view of the breathtaking Makati skyline or the serene landscape of the San Lorenzo Village area as well as the scenic Laguna area.

The San Lorenzo Tower offers a diverse mix of units to suit the needs of today's accomplished men and women. Buyers can choose from three-bedroom units for families and two-bedroom units for young couples.

Those even looking for a second home can definitely find the perfect unit to match their preference and need. Single individuals who love being in the center of the Greenbelt action can choose the one-bedroom unit. Aside from these, the San Lorenzo Tower boasts of one-bedroom loft units with unmatched ceiling height, offering spacious interiors highly ideal for those thriving in the modern and vibrant Greenbelt lifestyle.

Full-scale amenities

With the completion of the new San Lorenzo Tower, Ayala Land will also deliver the The Residences at Greenbelt's Grand Podium, a sprawling 5,000-square meter area of full-scale amenities provided exclusively for its residents. While the Grand Podium features facilities and open spaces for residents of both Laguna Tower and San Lorenzo, there will also be amenities exclusive for each tower.

Integrated with Greenbelt complex

Like the Laguna Tower, the new San Lorenzo Tower is completely integrated with the Greenbelt Lifestyle Center. With just a few steps down, residents will find themselves surrounded by Greenbelt's luxury shops, bookstores, theaters, coffee shops and restaurants. A short walk will lead them to the famed Greenbelt Park where they can enjoy the greenery and even attend daily Mass at the Greenbelt Chapel.

From The Residences at Greenbelt, getting around Makati's commercial establishments is so convenient with its integration with the MCBD pedestrian walkway system, a covered and elevated pedestrian walkway that allows residents to simply walk to Makati's major malls and business establishments without having to deal with vehicular traffic—even when it's raining or when the afternoon sun is shining! That means ultimate access and convenience when going to the office, shopping, dining or even doing errands!

A worthwhile investment

With its unmatched luxury, superior amenities and outstanding location, the new San Lorenzo Tower truly presents a valuable investment. Competitively priced and offering the best value for money, The Residences at Greenbelt's San Lorenzo Tower is another strong testament to Ayala Land's sterling reputation as the leader in the real estate industry. With Ayala Land's proven track record of excellence, residents of the new San Lorenzo Tower are assured that the value of their investment will be retained over time.

For inquiries on the San Lorenzo Tower of The Residences at Greenbelt, model unit viewing schedules and prices, call Lala Henson at 841-5522 or Amir Precilla at 841-5517. You may also call the Ayala Land hotline at 752-7000, e-mail ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.ayalaland.com.ph.

California roadshow makes you do business with Fil-Ams of West Coast

ARE you an entrepreneur or a professional feeling the economic crunch? Does it seem that your inventories do not move off the shelf or the listing block? Does it feel that the local market is no longer viable to sustain your business? If so, then it's time for you to join a roadshow and tap the Fil-American market in California.

Filipino-American Investment and Business Brokerage Inc., a company with offices in Glendale, California and Makati City and affiliated with Unigroup Resources Inc and Supremnet International, will stage an eight-city roadshow (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Long Beach, San Diego, San Jose, Sacramento, Carson and Las Vegas) from Nov. 11 to Dec. 4.

Those who will benefit from the roadshow are companies and individuals with products and services that are directed to the Filipino-American market like property developers and brokers, resort and leisure site owners, professionals, exporters and entrepreneurs.

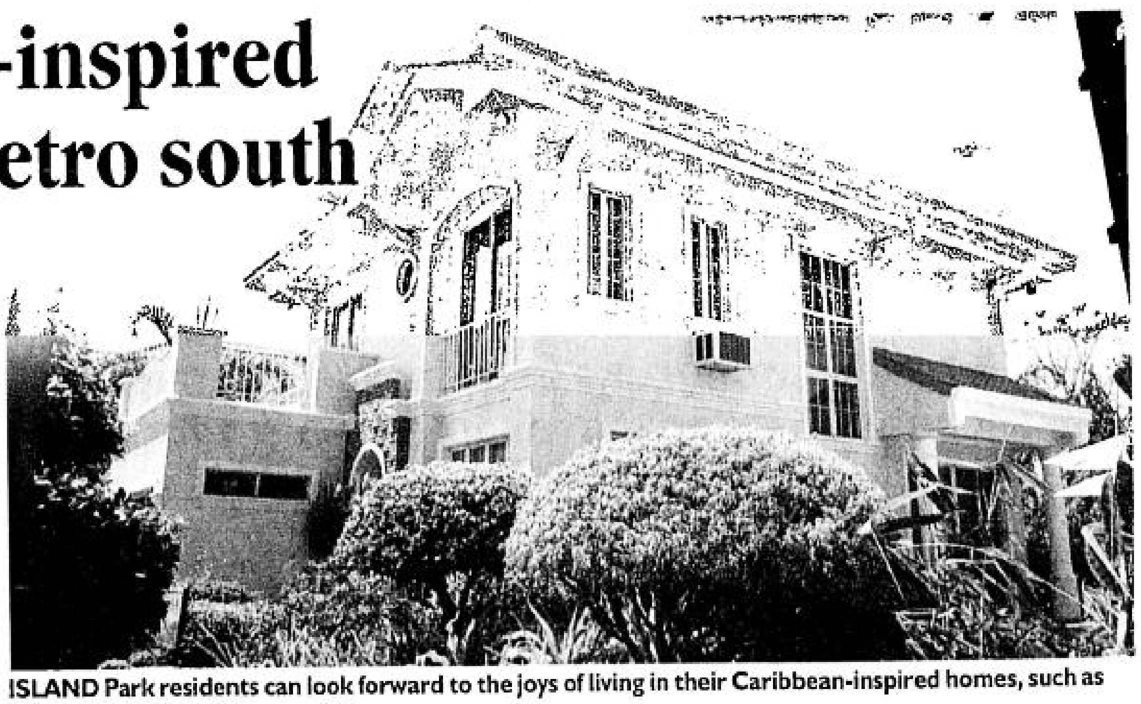
Rare opportunity

Participants to the roadshow will get a rare opportunity to present their products and services to a captive audience of Filipino-Americans with investing capacity gathered by FAIBB birddogs (agents) in the West Coast. FAIBB has the most expansive database of Filipino-Americans accessed through its own Fil-Am call center.

As a premium for joining the roadshow, participants will also be given customized training on how to market their products or services to the Fil-Am market as well as assistance in their visa and travel arrangements. All these services come in reasonably priced packages.

Limited slots are available. For particulars, call Shierly Bautista at 812-4782 or 750-3918 or at 0918-2908321. You may also visit the FAIBB office at Suite 501, 5th floor, Angelus Medical Plaza, V.A. Rufino St. Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Caribbean-inspired living in metro south


ISLAND Park residents can look forward to the joys of living in their Caribbean-inspired homes, such as this model home at Montego Villas.

THE CARIBBEAN boasts an unmistakable blend of cultural influences with indigenous and European origins, set amid natural tropical landscapes highlighted by dazzling beaches, green jungles and azure mountains.

Things Caribbean mean vivid colors, entrancing music and rhythms that include reggae, calypso and ska, food fare both spicy and sweet, and most of all, a relaxed, easy-going island lifestyle.

Caribbean architecture spells Dutch, French and Spanish baroque forms superimposed on indigenous pre-Columbian origins, with European elements. Homes are resplendent with colors as vibrant as the natural environment—shades of yellow, green and white bleached by the sun—manicured grass lawns, lush foliage replete with orchids and other flowers, complementing island scenes framed by blue ocean water.

Thematic inspiration

Such a thematic inspiration is the concept now taking shape at Island Park in Dasmariñas, Cavite, thanks to maverick developer Brittany Corp. With its 10-year track record of building high-end residential communities enriched by thoughtful master-planning and themes inspired by some of the world's best places, Brittany is building a community of island villages, intended for residents to whom such a "lifescape" resonates with possibilities for enjoying life to the fullest, as people in the Caribbean do.

Island Park takes advantage of a strategic location bound by Governor's Drive which enables easy access to leisure destinations in the south like Tagaytay, and Molino-Paliparan Highway off multilane Daanghari, a quick drive away from Alabang.

CARIBBEAN exteriors and interiors combine pre-colonial, European and African elements adapted to the tropics.

Caribbean design

The design of Caribbean exteriors and interiors combines pre-colonial, European elements adapted to the tropics, perfect for Island Park's natural environs.

Island Park residences highlight Caribbean influences such as steep gabled roofs, fretwork and window shutters outside, and easy simplicity combined with a colonial flavor in wicker furniture, natural tile or hardwood, and walls enhanced by white or tropical colors within.

The residences are set amid breezy, wide-open landscapes in keeping with community's generous 45:55 ratio of open space to development area, complemented by Paseo Park, a sports and athletic facility laid out among expansive greenery interlaced with paths and walkways interlaced, in addition to a luxurious leisure complex in which residents can entertain guests and host social events.

Inspiration

Jamaica's world-famous Montego Bay, with its signature beachfronts and lush tropical vegetation, is the inspiration for Montego Villas, a village of Island Park which offers home and lot residences starting at P7.5 million and custom home sites starting from P2.5 million.

Residents of Island Park can look forward to the privilege of savoring the pleasures of their Caribbean-inspired homes, resplendent with tropical colors and hues, set in liberating spaces constantly visited by fresh breezes, living in a summery ambiance created by this one-of-a-kind, luxury community. Previews of Island Park may be arranged by calling telephone numbers 850-6986 and 850-2868.

Storage spaces. . .

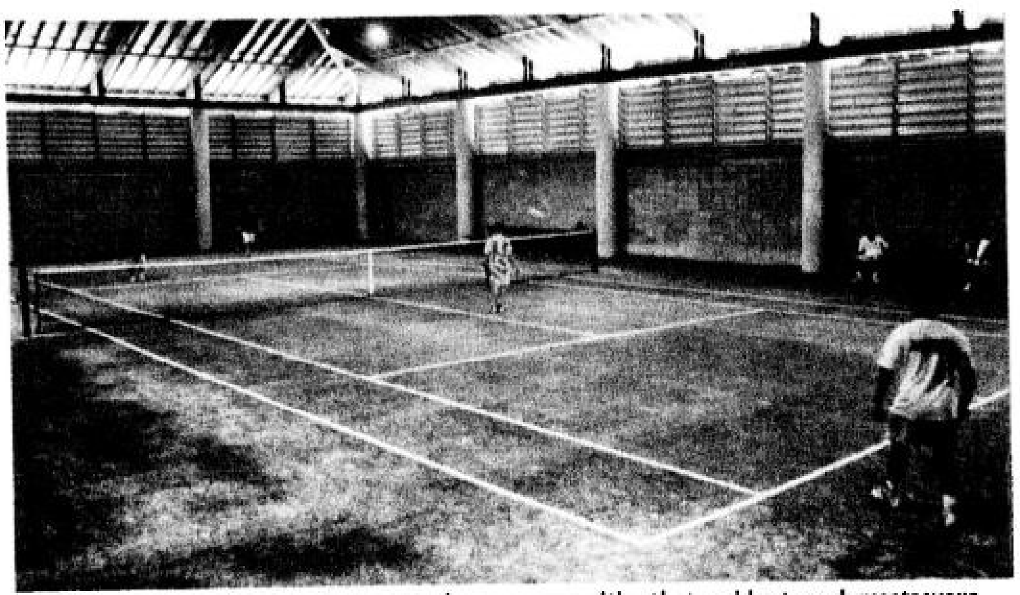
From page B3-1

have difficulty sleeping or make you still feel exhausted even after a night of full sleep.

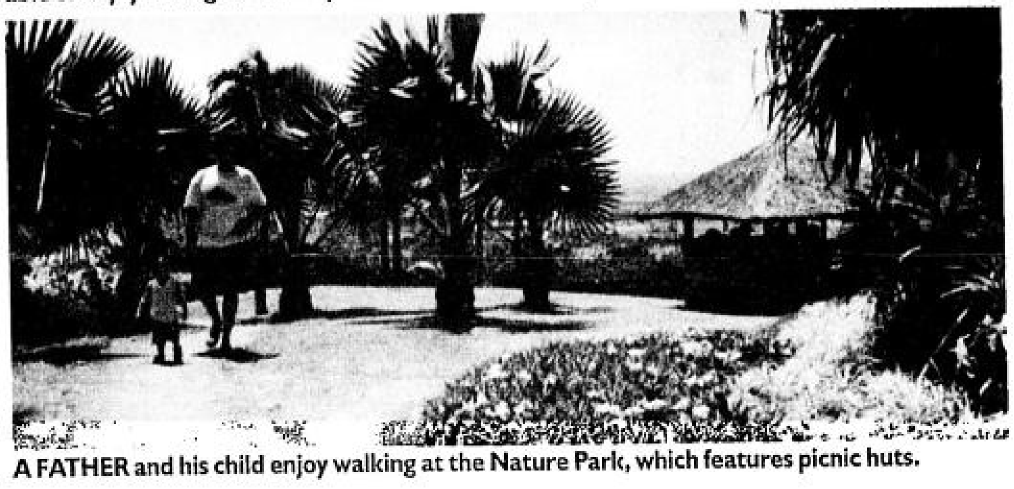
For those who have no choice but to turn this space into a storage area, Roberts advises using this space to stow extra beddings and soft, seasonal clothes such as jackets and sweaters.

Of course, common sense will tell us to store our various bric-a-brac and "junk" in areas which are accessible but will also keep our clutter hidden from view.

E-mail comments at fengshui.inquirer@gmail.com.



THE INDOOR tennis court was among the many amenities that residents and guests were able to enjoy during the weekly summer activities at Ayala Greenfield.



A FATHER and his child enjoy walking at the Nature Park, which features picnic huts.

Exciting summer treat at Ayala Greenfield

AYALA Greenfield celebrates summer with a series of recreational activities as part of its annual summer events. The exclusive residential subdivision has enjoyed big turnouts from lot owners and guests for their weekly activities, which included a camping clinic for youngsters, a kite-flying festival, RC plane aerial exhibitions and paintball games.

"The lot owners very much enjoyed the activities that we organized for their families and friends. They were so happy to see Ayala Greenfield evolving into a real residential community with a lot of activities and developments going on. The family can now enjoy Ayala Greenfield's resort-class swimming pool, picnic areas and indoor sports facilities, like badminton, tennis, basketball and fitness gym. They can also have fun activities at the fishing lagoon, open fields and playgrounds." according to Ayala Land Inc. department manager Pol Tanco.

More enjoyable

He also points out that the natural setting of Ayala Greenfield makes summer more enjoyable. "Ayala Greenfield is the best place to spend your summer because of its cool breeze and rich vegetation. You will also enjoy the spectacular views of Mt. Makiling, Laguna de Bay and the mountain ridges from the different vantage points. And all of these are part of your daily experience if you are living at Ayala Greenfield."

And the much-anticipated completion of the all-weather, championship golf course will further reinforce the variety of recreational activities at Ayala Greenfield. The front nine holes of the golf course were opened for play last January, while the remaining nine holes will be playable by July 2005. The golf clubhouse will also be ready by October 2005.

A PLAYER poses to ambush other participants during a paintball game at Ayala Greenfield.

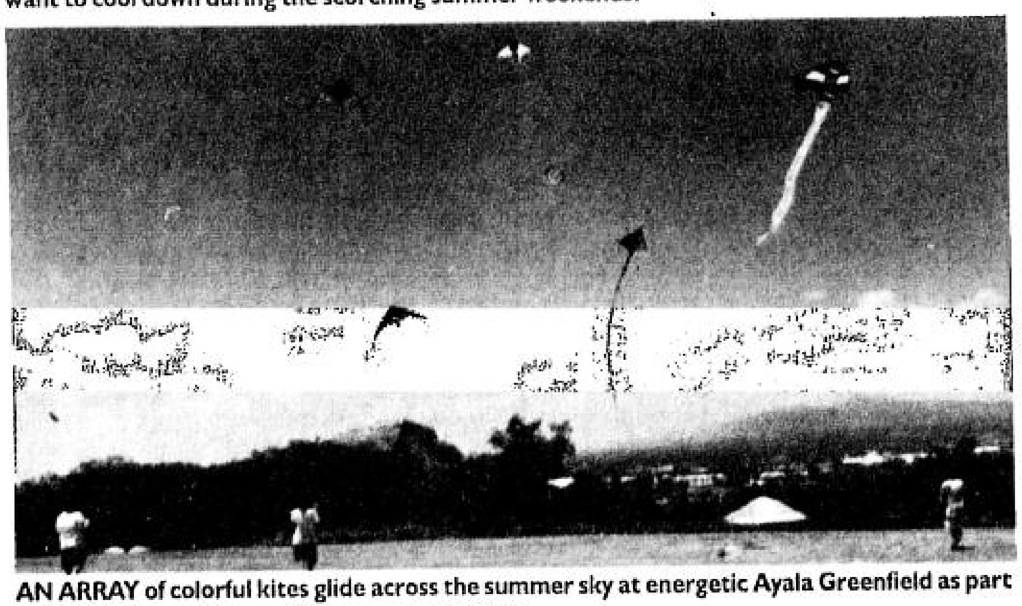
Family community

Ayala Greenfield is a family community that is ideal for those looking for an active lifestyle. It is conducive to daily recreational indoor and outdoor activities, whether they be golf games, team sports or other recreational interests. The place is only a 20-minute ride from Alabang.

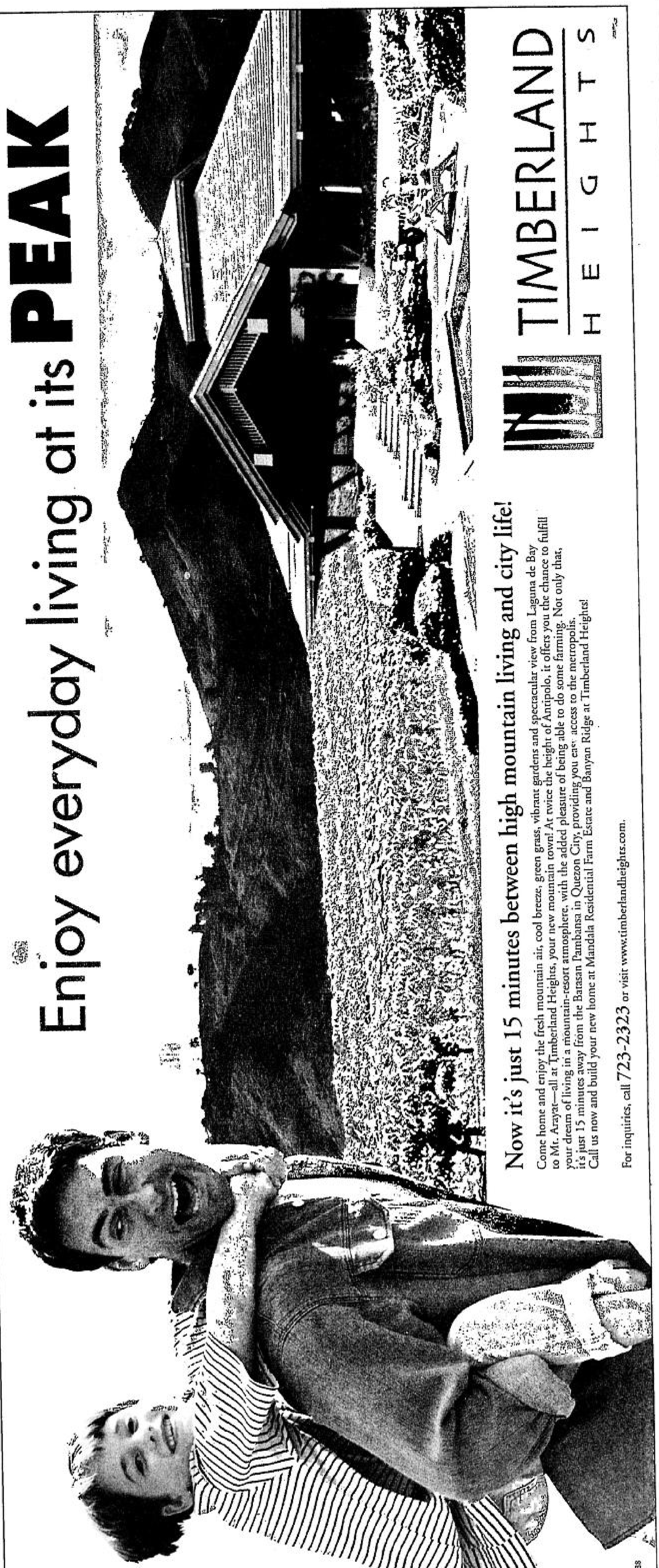
Ayala Greenfield brings the finest amenities and a dedication to service that has won over many homeowners to this unique community. Its varying lot types are privy to scenic perspectives of natural wonders such as Mt. Makiling, Laguna de Bay and other nearby picturesque spots. The best outdoor views are also the postcard-pretty images framed by the windows of one's Ayala Greenfield home.

For further details on Ayala Greenfield, please call 728-7000, log on to www.ayalagreenfieldestates.com, or e-mail ayalasales@ayalaland.com.ph.

THE VILLAGE Clubhouse infinity and kiddie pools are popular amenities for families who want to cool down during the scorching summer weekends.



AN ARRAY of colorful kites glide across the summer sky at energetic Ayala Greenfield as part of the development's weekly summer activities.



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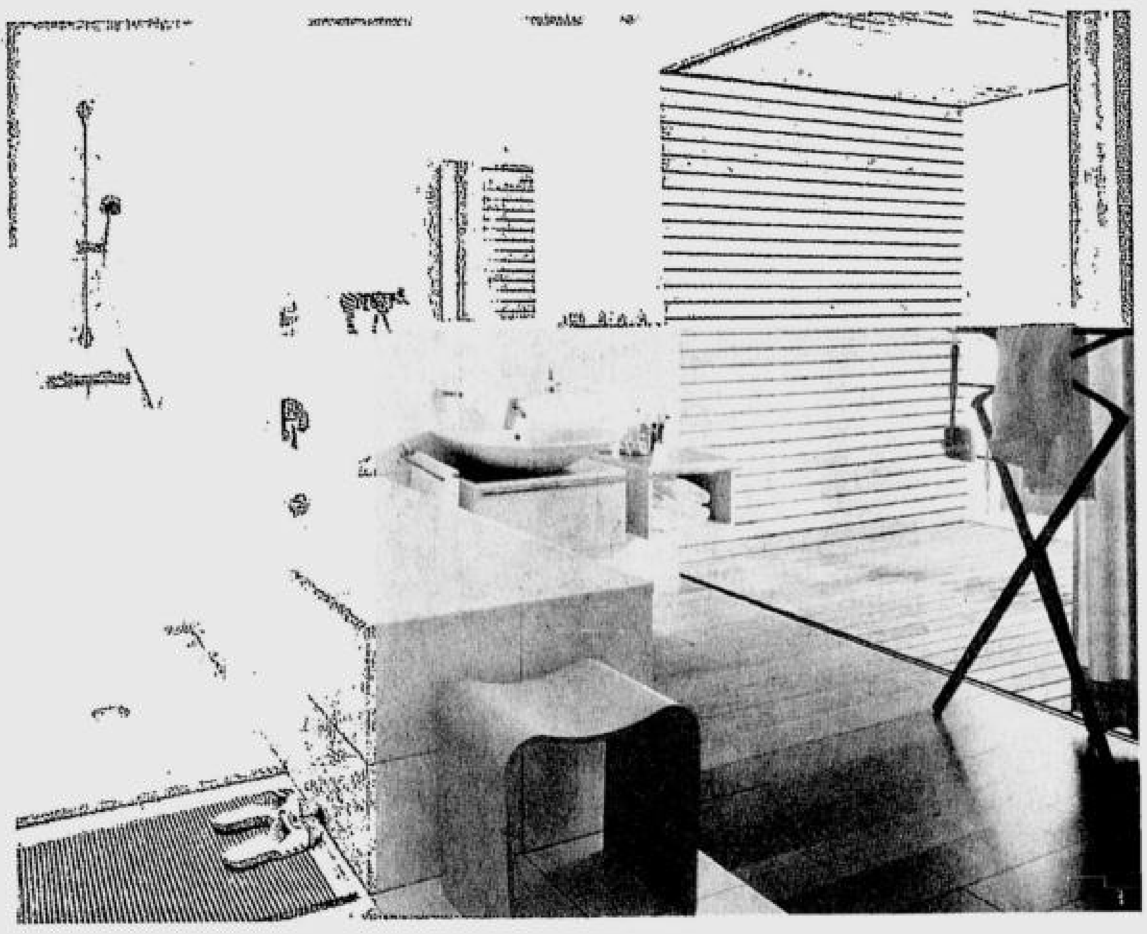
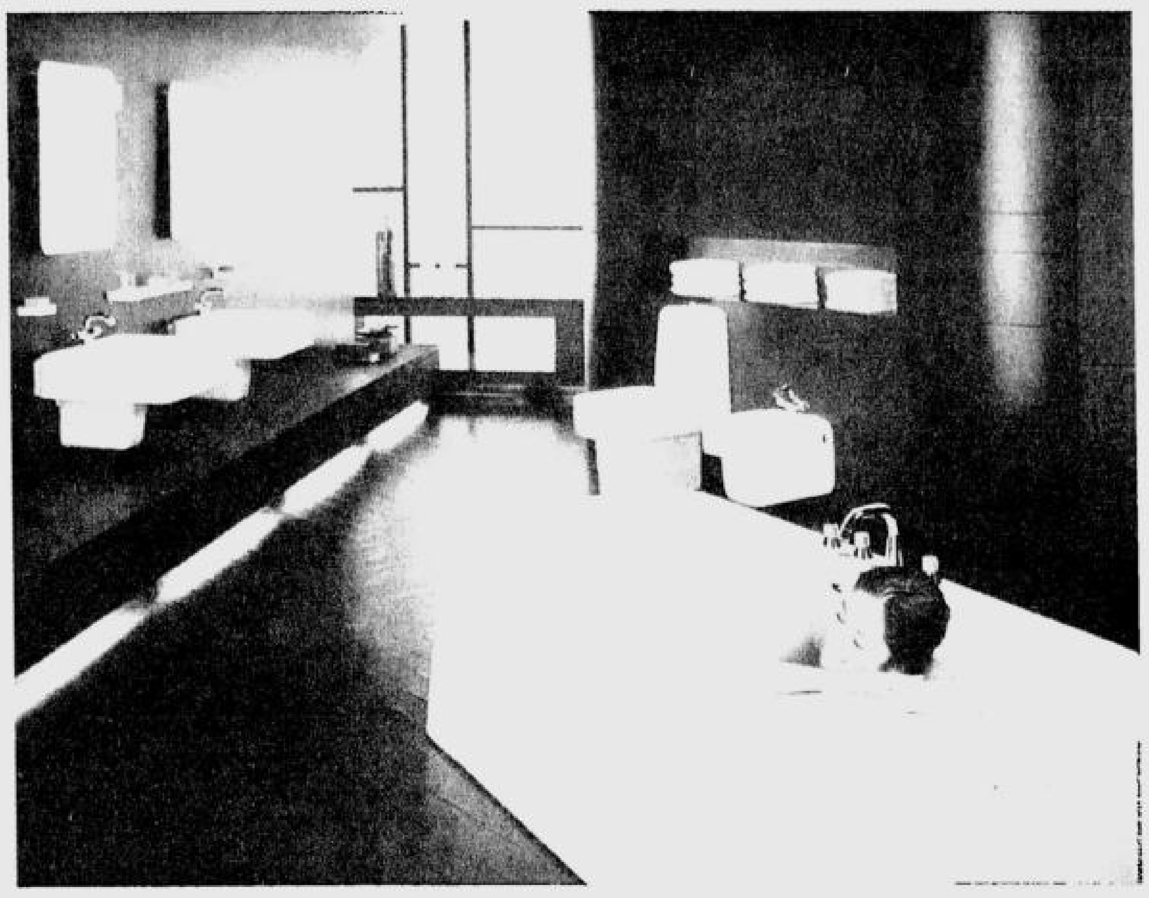


SMOOTH curves dominate the Tonic line.



AMERICAN Standard collaborated with renowned designer Mark Newson to come up with this simple yet elegant bathroom package.

ELEGANT AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCT LINES

American Standard makes fresh start in RP

By Charles E. Buban

IS LESS more? Or is less a bore? For centuries, designers have debated on whether simplicity should take center stage or should ornament does.

Even bathrooms are not spared as their designs are revised, refined and updated as years go by.

Today, the trend is going for minimalist as more and more homes and establishments go for simple, clean, crisp lines in the bathroom—fittings, fixtures and furnishings included.

Following this trend, American Standard has also evolved by offering space-saving and style-enhancing designs in their line of products as well as continuously raising the bar with innovative new products for the kitchen and bath that redefine the ordinary.

Exciting time

"Indeed, this is an exciting time for the company as we make a fresh start in the country, beginning with this new line of products designed by Marc Newson, a noted London-based industrial designer whose works have been exhibited in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Design Museum in London and the Musé des Arts Decoratifs in Paris," describes American Standard Philippines country manager Felino Bernardo.

He reveals that with the brand's worldwide reach and network, it would be very easy for American Standard to bring its hottest designs and technological innovations to the Philippines without much challenge.

American Standard Philippines enjoys global design and innovation resources from the brand's global bath and kitchen operation, with manufacturing and product development facilities through North America, Europe, South America and Asia.

"Actually, the main task ahead of us is how to communicate this to our partners, particularly the architects and specifiers," explains Bernardo who is responsible in overseeing the brand's kitchen and bath business in the country.

Going around

In explaining American Standard Philippines strategy, Bernardo reveals that his team is busy going around the country, reestablishing ties with their old partners as well as new distributors and presenting them the company's latest total bathroom solutions.

"The Philippine market is very matured, meaning our consumers expect more from their kitchen and bath fixtures, they want sophisticated designs, high-quality products and products that are innovative. I believe these three qualities will give us a lot of advantage (over their competitors)," says Bernardo.

ACACIA line creates a modern take on a classic era known for its sophistication and elegance.

Innovations

Bernando also revealed several of the innovations that his company has developed.

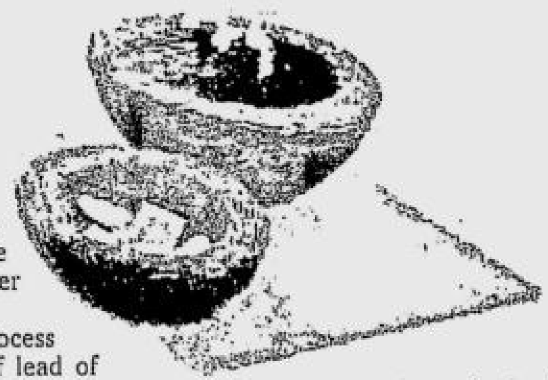
"As part of the technology for healthy sanitary ware, American Standard uses the Microban and Super Low-Lead technologies in its products including sanitary ware and water faucet. These technologies provide added value to our products, while enhancing confidence and satisfaction on the part of consumers," explains Bernardo.

Microban is the latest technology originally developed in the United States to control the growth of bacteria. It effectively prevents the growth of bacteria such as E-coli and Staph while preventing stains and unpleasant smell caused by bacteria on the sanitary ware and within the toilet.

Microban is built into raw materials used in manufacturing American Standard products like toilet bowls, wash basins, bathtubs and shower trays.

Low lead content

As for the faucet, American Standard has developed Super-Low-Lead technology to extract lead from brass, which is the main raw material in the manufacture of water faucet.



"The lead extraction process helps reduce the level of lead of water going through our faucet products to the level required by the international standards," says Bernardo.

Bernardo also reveals that American Standard seat and covers are also made of antibreak and antiscratch materials mainly composed of high-grade urea formaldehyde cast under high temperature that ensures the products to resist breakage of loads of up to 240 kg.

Moreover, he shares that American Standard products with antistain technology passed through the ultra glaze process that inhibits dirt and grime from sticking into the ceramic surface to further reduce the incidence of stain and odor buildup and makes the bowl easier to clean.

"With these breakthrough technologies, American Standard promises to exceed its consumers' expectations and offer products that break the traditional molds of form and function," he says.

Worldwide, American Standard's bath and kitchen business had $2.4 billion (P131 billion) in sales last year.

Cabanatuan experiences serenity of masterplanned community

STA. ARCADIA Estates offer Mediterranean-inspired homes with floor area ranging from 50 to 130 sq m., within a flood-free community located at the heart of the Cabanatuan commercial area.

HIGH standards of community development have been driving the sales of Sta. Arcadia Estates, the 20-hectare residential project of Laguna Properties Holdings Inc. in Cabanatuan City. Enticed by the availability of 24-hour security, cemented and lighted roads and other amenities, local residents have purchased more than 50 percent of the residential units for sale, since its project launch late in 2003.

To local residents of this economic, educational and recreational hub of Luzon, Sta. Arcadia Estates' unique selling proposition has been the subdivision's flood-free environment, points out Herbert Herrero, project officer of LPHI's first development North of Manila.

Through meticulous planning and sound engineering, the entire subdivision was raised to an average of 2.0 meters above ground level. Thus, Sta. Arcadia Estates has been able to literally keep itself above floodwaters even during periods of continuous rains.

Sta. Arcadia Estates has also been attracting buyers through its featured courtyards. Homes have been laid out around the open spaces which will serve as mini parks and where neighbors can converge and enjoy each other's company. Also, the developments centrally located amenities area which includes a clubhouse, swimming pool, playground and community park is equally accessible to all.

Situated three kilometers from the city proper, future residents will be spared from most noises of the city. Yet they will remain minutes away from commercial establishments, the central bus terminal, the market place, schools, major malls and the city hall. Sta. Arcadia Estates is primarily accessible through the Cabanatuan Papaya Road (Mabini Road), which connects to the main Maharlika Highway. When fully completed, the proposed four-lane Cabanatuan Diversion Road, immediately in front of the subdivision, will also serve as another convenient means of access.

House and lot packages begin at P1.5 millions. Lots only begin at P 750,000. House buyers may choose from six Mediterranean-inspired house models—Arsia, Siena, Ravenna, Genoa, Novara and Marsala—with floor areas ranging from 50 to 130 square meters on 150- to 300-sq-m lots.

Herrero discloses that businessmen and entrepreneurs from the province, as well as overseas professionals from the US, Europe and Japan have taken advantage and availed of price offerings and flexible payment terms.

For further inquiry and details of Sta. Arcadia Estates, LPHI's sales team can be reached through their Makati office at 841-7425 or at their Cabanatuan Sales Office at (004) 4638727.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

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92% of Filipinos prone to heart, vascular diseases

By Charles E. Buban

WE'VE heard the alarming statistics, but this one should concern us the most: 92 percent of Filipinos 20 years and above have at least one of the risk factors that may soon lead to coronary artery disease and cardiovascular disease if not addressed immediately.

These risk factors include diabetes, hypercholesterolemia (high cholesterol levels in the bloodstream), obesity, high blood pressure and smoking.

Philippine Heart Association president Dr. Norbert Lingling Uy said this information, revealed in the 6th National Nutrition and Health Survey (NNHeS), should serve as basis in the development of health policies and programs for the prevention and control of lifestyle- and nutrition-related diseases.

"These figures are certainly cause for great concern. But it is never too late in life to change habits that are harmful to your heart. Improvements in exercise and diet patterns have fairly quick results, regardless of age. The same goes for smoking," Uy said.

4 in 10

The NNHeS report also showed that 22 out of 100 Filipino adults are hypertensive (with blood pressure of 140/90 or higher), and 40 percent of those between 20 and 29 already have prehypertensive findings.

"This figure will certainly increase if individuals belonging to this age group will not adopt a healthier lifestyle," noted Uy.

According to the doctor, high cholesterol levels can cause cardiovascular system disorders, and by age 40 onward, a great number of Filipino adults already experience hypercholesterolemia.

These disorders are coronary artery disease (CAD) and cardiovascular disease (CVD). CAD occurs when the arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle (coronary arteries) become hardened and narrowed, thus decreasing the oxygen supply to the heart muscle. CVD refers to a variety of conditions affecting the circulatory system including hypertension, coronary heart disease and stroke.

The controllable risk factors for heart and vascular diseases have received so much publicity that by this time we should all be in the pink of good health.

"However, there is a huge gap between basic awareness and positive action," noted Uy.

He said the rate of heart and vascular diseases in the Philippines remains high, due in part to lack of proper diet and exercise, and other unhealthy habits like cigarette smoking.

Battle on 2 fronts

"The battle to defeat heart and cardiovascular diseases must be fought on two fronts: the research lab and our homes. While there is significant advancement in drugs used to treat and prevent heart attacks, strokes, high blood pressure and circulatory diseases, there is also a need to reduce personal stress and seek early detection and treatment," said Uy.

The doctor advised against eating food cooked from recycled cooking oil (usually found in fast-food menus) and instead recommended an increase in one's intake of fruits, vegetables, fish and shellfish.

"A proper diet can take care of the vast majority of individuals with high cholesterol, and help save on the expense of medications. Even modest changes in diet have the potential to make a big difference in a patient's health outlook," he said.

To further help increase public awareness about heart and vascular diseases, the PHA has included the NNHeS report in its 36th annual convention program next week (May 25 to 28).

Guidelines on cholesterol evaluation and management for Filipinos will also be discussed during the same event to be held at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

Rescuing the distressed heart

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

(Conclusion)

MEDICAL FILES

A HEART attack, or acute myocardial infarction (AMI), occurs when a narrowed blood vessel (coronary artery) supplying the heart muscle (myocardium) is completely blocked by a blood clot, thus depriving the heart muscle cells of necessary oxygen and nutrients. If the interruption of blood flow is prolonged (30 minutes or longer), heart cells begin to die. It is therefore most urgent to restore the blood flow to the heart muscle to minimize permanent heart injury.

Rapid restoration of blood flow is achieved using drug and/or mechanical interventions. Drugs that dissolve blood clots (so called clot-busters or thrombolytics) can be administered intravenously in the emergency room as soon as diagnosis of AMI is made; they usually open the blocked artery within 90 minutes.

If a cardiac catheterization laboratory is available, percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (PTCA) can also be done wherein a collapsed balloon is threaded into the blocked artery and then dilated to disrupt the clot and open the artery.

Nowadays PTCA is often followed up with the deployment of a wire mesh stent coated with drugs to keep the artery open much longer. Salvaging of heart tissues is expected as long as the procedure to open the blocked artery is done within six hours of onset of chest pain. But this procedure can only be done in modern medical centers. Most heart attack patients end up not having the blocked artery opened by either thrombolytic therapy or PTCA.

Standard care

So what else can be done for these AMI patients in whom myocardial blood supply remains compromised?

Standard care includes administration of agents that prevent platelet activation and aggregation (such as aspirin and clopidogrel) and which slow down further clot formation (such as heparins). Cholesterol-lowering agents, particularly the statins, likewise help by reducing cholesterol deposits in the blood vessel wall, thus dampening the major trigger for blood clots and preventing further heart attacks.

Another proven treatment in AMI patients are beta-blockers that slow heart rate and lower blood pressure. Nitrates dilate the veins and coronary arteries and thus help increase myocardial blood supply. They relieve the chest pains. However, prolonged use often leads to nitrate tolerance, and large clinical trials failed to show improved survival or reduced risk of repeat MI with the use of nitrates.

Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors are now also routinely used in AMI patients. Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs) are given to those who cannot tolerate ACE inhibitors.

Complementary approach

A different but complementary approach exists to help the oxygen-starved (ischemic) myocardium become more efficient in utilizing the limited oxygen supply. This treatment approach is based on metabolic manipulation, which switches the fuels used for energy production from the more oxygen-wasting fatty acids to the more oxygen-sparing glucose.

Trimetazidine is one such agent which induces this "metabolic shift," thus allowing the heart cells to manufacture more energy molecules called adenosine triphosphate (ATP) with less oxygen.

In heart attack patients, a study done in Europe on 19,725 AMI patients demonstrated that among those who did not receive thrombolysis, treatment with trimetazidine led to improved outcomes at 35 days with less cardiac deaths and complications from heart attack.

A study conducted locally involving 51 AMI patients who did not receive thrombolysis showed less heart tissue damage after two months of trimetazidine therapy.

These findings are especially relevant for many heart attack patients since majority of them will not receive thrombolytic agents (or even less likely PTCA/ICS).

In the final analysis, combined therapy using antiplatelets/anticoagulants, statins, hemodynamic agents, and metabolic agents provide the best chance for weathering the storm or surviving a heart attack with minimal complications.

(This series was written in collaboration with Prof. Ramon Abarquez, and Doctors Esperanza Cabral, Nelson Abelardo and Loewe Go.)

Math Challenge

(First of two parts)

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

WITHOUT using a pen, paper or calculator, can you answer this question in 15 seconds: Four marbles weigh the same as 6 ping-pong balls. How many marbles will weigh the same as 45 ping-pong balls? I am sure most of you can easily get the answer, which is 30.

Now try this: It takes 4 minutes to fill up a tank to 2/3 of its capacity. How long will it take to fill it to 5/6 of its capacity? The answer is 5 minutes.

How about this question: The total surface area of a cube is 24 square centimeters. How many times as big is the surface area of another cube whose edge is twice as long as that of the smaller cube? The answer is 4.

These are some of the questions our country's top Grade 6 students faced last April 9 at the finals of the country's biggest Math Challenge, now on its eighth year. In 1997, Metrobank Foundation entered into a partnership with the Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines (MTAP) and the Department of Education for the conduct of the first Math Challenge in 1998. Each year participation steadily increased, and this year, 265,704 students and 15,369 schools from 17 regions battled it out for the top prizes, which included close to half a million pesos in cash, trophies and medals.

Excellence in math

The theme of the Math Challenge this year was "Moving Forward Through Excellence in Mathematics," aptly named, for after grueling eliminations, 77 grade six and fourth year high school students competed in the national finals.

I was privileged to be the head judge for the team competition in the National Finals, and with my fellow judges Dr. Ian Garces (assistant professor at the Ateneo de Manila University) and Dr. Polly Sy (professor at the UP Diliman), witnessed firsthand the talent of our youth. Dr. Milagros Ibe (professor at Miriam College), Dr. Flordeliza Francisco (assistant professor) and Dr. Ninette de las Penas (associate professor, both at the Ateneo) also marveled at the ingenuity the contestants displayed in the individual oral competitions.

Sampler

Why don't you try answering some of the questions? Aside from the ones given above, the contestants dealt with questions to be answered within 30 seconds, with the help of pen and paper, such as:

- Which of these is the longest measure: 42 minutes, 1,500 seconds, or 0.5 hours? [Answer: 42 minutes]
- What is the smallest number greater than 1 which when multiplied to 420 will give a square number? [Answer: 105]
- Mr. Cruz was buying gasoline at a station at P31.50 a liter. Will his P500 bill be able to buy 16 liters? If yes, how much change will he get? If no, how much more money does he need? [Answer: No, he needs P4 more.]

Now for some real challenges. You have a minute to answer the following, like our contestants:

- The market value of a car decreases every year by 10 percent on the first year, by 15 percent on the second year, and by 20 percent on the third year. If the purchase value of a new car is P600,000, what is its value after it has been used for three years? [Answer: P367,200]
- The population of our country grows by 2.3 percent every year. If the population at the end of 2004 was 80 million, what is an estimate of the population (to the nearest thousand), at the end of 2006? [Answer: 83,722,000]
- How many ping-pong balls can be packed in a rectangular box 30 cm long, 20 cm wide and 16 cm tall if each ball has a diameter of 5 cm? [Answer: 72]

Winners

The winners in the Grade 6 team competition were: Aileen Giselle L. Chua and Earl John R. Chua of Grace Christian High School (Quezon City), coached by Remedios Renegado. They got a perfect score. In second place were Benetta Joy A. Branzuela and Dwight Ghardin T. Razonable of St. Paul College of Ilocos Sur (Bantay, Ilocos Sur), coached by Marites A. Osalvo. Bronze medallists were Joe Drigo V. Enriquez and Raphael R. Santos of The Peninsula School (Limay, Bataan).

The Grade 6 individual competition winners were (in order): Ron Michael L. Castillo of Adriatico Memorial School (Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro), coached by Maximo E. Alcanices; Joe Drigo V. Enriquez; and Sheldon Walter V. Wong of Ateneo de Davao University (Davao City), coached by Gresilda Monforte.

Chito Sobrepeña, president of Metrobank Foundation, reflected, "As the voyage took our valiant students from the eliminations, to the division, regional and finally the national rounds, varying emotions gripped a room full of young hopeful expressions—the exhilaration of winning, the frustration of defeat and eagerness to perform better in the future.

"The road to excellence, especially in mathematics, is neither easy nor simple, but with proper motivation, those who are best prepared are able to succeed and surpass even their personal aspirations. This year's Math Challenge not only provided thousands of young students the opportunity to highlight their skills and talents, it has further instilled in our participants the more important values of hard work, discipline and teamwork."

Acupuncture, real or fake, helps reduce migraines

A STUDY found that acupuncture and a sham version of the same thing both helped reduce the frequency of migraine headaches, for reasons that are not clear.

The findings from Technische Universitaet in Munich, Germany, seem to confirm other studies that acupuncture is a beneficial migraine treatment, but do not shed light on exactly why, the authors said.

"Conclusions must be careful, but in the end patients—at least those in the study—seem to benefit in a clinically relevant manner from repetitive needling considered by them as acupuncture," said Klaus Linde, a physician who was the study's chief author.

His study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, involved 302 migraine patients tested in 2002 and 2003. Some were given standard acupuncture treatments, while others were administered something that resembled acupuncture but was not: the needles were inserted not as deeply and not at regular acupuncture points on the body.

A third group in the study got no treatment at all but were told they were on a waiting list for the research.

Reduced by half

The proportion of those who said their headaches were reduced by at least half was 51 percent in the acupuncture group, 53 percent in the sham treatment group and 15 percent among those waiting for treatment.

"We cannot be certain that the effects are only or mainly psychological although this might be an explanation," Linde said.

"There is, for example, evidence that expectancy modulates pain perception [not only reporting but true perception] and many patients in Germany have a very positive attitude toward acupuncture [and our study patients clearly had]," he added.

But repeatedly sticking needles into the skin can possibly affect "pain memory," he said, so it could be a mixture of psychological and physical factors.

Studies indicate that about 7 percent of men and up to 18 percent of women suffer migraines.

Reuters

Watch out for killer legs!

By Henrylito D. Tacio
Contributor

TWO American leaders—former President Richard Nixon and former Vice President Dan Quayle—experienced the attack of killer legs and both never knew it!

"You'd be surprised how often a pulmonary embolism is missed, even with most skilled physicians," Quayle said in a statement. "Misdiagnosis is common."

Pulmonary embolism (PE) is a complication of a medical condition called deep vein thrombosis (DVT), in which a blood clot forms inside the deep veins of the lower legs, thighs, or pelvis.

Although there is no single, simple cause, DVT may be due to injury to the lining of the vein, changes in the pattern of blood flow (like compression, turbulence and stagnation), and increased tendency for blood to clot and for that clot not to naturally dissolve again.

"One out of three causes usually does not trigger DVT and three out of three is fortunately uncommon," says Dr. Rene De Jongh, South Asia medical director of the assistance services of International SOS in Singapore.

Difficult to detect

While DVT has given much attention in the United States and Europe, such is not the case in the Philippines. "It is difficult to detect travel-related DVT because we don't screen, and we don't know actual risk, and [diagnosis] is less accurate in asymptomatic people," explains Dr. Teresa B. Abola, a cardiologist at the Philippine Heart Center.

This must be the reason the public is not aware of the potential health risk of blood clots. Clotting the blood is "nature's way of trying to prevent bleeding," says Dr. Rafael Castillo, a cardiologist and chair of the department of medicine of the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital. But when nature's protective mechanism goes awry, there is a danger of blood clots resulting in DVT.

Health authorities say DVT is instigated by prolonged periods of physical immobility. "If a person is just sitting around and not moving, say, during a very long flight, he may risk himself of developing DVT," says Dr. Gary Raskob, dean of the college of public health at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

How DVT happens

DVT starts with blood clots forming in the veins of the legs during hours of immobility (that is, long-haul flights). When mobility resumes (for instance, once a passenger deplanes) the clots can break free of the vein, and travel to the lungs causing a pulmonary embolism that may result in death.

In a study published in Aviation Space and Environmental Medicine, 87 percent of identified DVT cases occurred following either a return trip or after an outward journey involving long trips made up of sequential flights. In France, researchers from the Hospital Pasteur claim that air travelers who sit for more than five hours on planes are more likely to develop blood clots in their leg than nontravelers.

At the Narita hospital near Tokyo's International Airport, records show an average of 100 to 150 passengers are treated for DVT immediately upon arrival each year; 3 to 5 percent of them die.

"Only one percent of air passengers suffers from DVT," says Dr. Farrol Kahn, head of the United Kingdom-based Aviation Health Institute. "Other passengers who have predisposing factors have a higher risk of between 5 and 6 percent. About 10-15 passengers on a jumbo jet (Boeing 747) could develop DVT."

Risk factors

There are multiple risk factors for developing blood clots in the leg, health authorities claim. There are genetic risk factors and then superimposed on that are risk factors such as having surgery or a trauma.

"It is likely that most individuals who develop DVT during or after a long plane flight also have additional risk factors," maintains Dr. Raskob.

This has been confirmed in a study which appeared in the British Journal of Hematology. It concluded that the risk of DVT was only increased in long-haul travelers if one or more additional risk factors were present.

According to Dr. Walter Fister, whose special interest is on public health and who works with the Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre in Singapore, the risk of DVT is greater in the following people: older persons (over 40 years); have had previous blood clots; with a family history of blood clots or an inherited clotting tendency; suffering from or who have had treatment for cancer; with certain blood diseases; being treated for heart failure and circulation problems; have had recent surgery especially on the hips or knees; and pregnant.

Obese, smokers and tall people are also at risk. "Women who take birth control pills or undergoing hormone replacement therapy are also likely to suffer from DVT because estrogen is a risk factor for clotting," says Dr. Raskob.

Almost half the time, DVT strikes without warning. "Up to 50 percent of all DVT cases are unknown—most likely even higher—since most people may not experience any symptoms at all," says Dr. Fister. "Most likely a lot of people get DVT without any knowledge and where the clot forms and dissolves all on its own and they are none the wiser."

Misdiagnosing DVT

In most instances, doctors misdiagnose DVT. "The symptoms and signs are very 'nonspecific,' meaning they may be caused by many different medical conditions," explains Dr. Raskob.

"DVT is frequently mistaken for other conditions such as muscle strains, skin infections, heart failure, dependent edema and ruptured Baker's cyst," says Dr. Haizal bin Haron Kamar, associate professor in medicine and cardiology at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur.

In instances where symptoms do present themselves, they may include deep muscle pain, muscular tenderness, swelling or tightness, discoloration of the affected area, and skin that feels unusually warm. More often that not, these classical symptoms are found in only a minority of cases, says Dr. Jongh.

DVT's fatal complication

Pulmonary embolism, DVT's fatal complication, is also hard to diagnose. Just as the symptoms and signs of a DVT are not unique to it, the presenting or warning signs of PE are not characteristic either, as some, many or none of the following may be evident: sweating, fainting, feeling short of breath, feeling pain or tightness in the chest, having a fast pulse, and coughing up blood-stained phlegm, among others, says Dr. Jongh.

"DVT does not occur during the flight but after the flight hours or days later," reminds Kahn. "Even two to three weeks later, anyone who experienced some symptoms should consult their doctors. They should tell them that they have been on a flight and ask to check them for possible DVT."

Symptoms alone are not the only basis for a person to be diagnosed of suffering from DVT. Dr. Mark Ebell, associate medical professor of the Michigan State University, says the most commonly used diagnostic tests for DVT include ultrasound (test blood flow through the veins), constant venography (monitoring the progress of dye injected into the bloodstream), chest X-ray/scan (for people with breathing difficulties), arterial blood gas (to measure the amount of oxygen and other gases in the blood), and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

Castillo Dr. Mariano Alimurung lecturer at PHA annual convention

RENOWNED cardiologist Rafael Castillo is the Philippine Heart Association 36th annual convention Dr. Mariano Alimurung lecturer. With the theme "Confluence of Competencies for Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases," the PHA annual convention will be held from May 25 to 28 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The Mariano Alimurung lecture is the highlight of the convocation and opening ceremonies on May 25 at 3 p.m. at the Isla Ballroom 2.

One of the pillars

Dr. Alimurung, the first PHA president (1952-1953) was a great cardiologist and one of the pillars of cardiology in our country. Every year, through the Alimurung lecture, the PHA pays homage to a great cardiologist, a great teacher, a great scientist, a diplomat in cardiology for in many instances, he represented the Philippines in international meetings.

Dr. Alimurung was the founding president of the PHA and the president of the Philippine College of Cardiology in 1952 and 1953.

Topnotch clinician

A past president of the PHA, Castillo is a topnotch clinician, most sought-after lecturer, prolific writer, esteemed opinion leader, indefatigable editor, astute businessman, devoted father and husband. As a student, his scholastic record is impressive, evoking admiration and envy among his peers. In the medical domain and in his other pursuits, he continues to reap laurels, said PHA president Norbert Lingling Uy.

In 1977, he completed his medical degree cum laude and meritissimus from the pontifical University of Santo Tomas. From 1978 to 1983, he took his medical internship, residency in internal medicine and clinical fellowship in cardiology at the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital. He eventually became a diplomate in internal medicine, cardiology and pharmaceutical medicine in 1985, 1986 and 1988, respectively.

When he was at the helm of the PHA from 1993 to 1994, he served the organization with unquestionable integrity, unequivocal dedication and unbridled passion.

Currently, Dr. Castillo is the president and executive director of the Clinical Hypertension and Atherosclerosis Research on Therapies, Epidemiology and Risk-management (Charter) and vice president and member of the board of trustees, Philippine Society of Hypertension. He is editor in chief, Philippine Journal of Internal Medicine; consultant in adult cardiology, Manila Doctors' Hospital, Lung Center of the Philippines and National Kidney Institute; and Medical Files columnist, Science/Health section, Philippine Daily Inquirer and editor in chief, Health & Lifestyle Magazine.

44 awards, citations

To date, Dr. Castillo has amassed 44 awards and citations from various medical and nonmedical organizations, and has authored and co-authored 34 published scientific papers and 75 articles, commentaries and editorials.

He has found his niche in the following biographical listings: Marquiz's Who's Who in the World, 12th Edition; Top 5000 Personalities in the World (American Biographical Institute) 5th Edition; Men of Achievement (International Biographical Centre (Cambridge, 17th Edition.)

However, he has largely remained unaffected by all these achievements and acclamations. The ever-smiling past president of the Philippine Heart Association is unassuming, charismatic and genteel.

Family man

Notwithstanding his numerous preoccupations and diverse roles, he has never lost focus on what his utmost priority is—that of being a family man—husband to Dr. Rebecca Castillo (nee Lorenzo) and father to two lovely, smart and God-fearing daughters, Rochelle and Roxanne. Now in their teens, both are keen on following their parents' footsteps—not just in pursuing medicine, but in leaving an indelible mark in every path they take.

Blessed with the gift of healing, the art of writing and the passion of achieving, it will just be a matter of time before Dr. Castillo seeks greater heights and tackles newer challenges.

The two other professorial lecturers are Doctors Nguyen Van Phan (Rodolfo Soto lecture) and Supatchai Chaithiraphan (Dr. Homobono B. Calleja lecture). Both are noted clinicians, academicians and lecturers in their respective countries.

Smart clock knows when you're ready to get up

PARIS—Sometimes, goes the old joke, I wake up grumpy. At other times, I let him sleep.

Grumpy need never wake up anything less than refreshed, thanks to a futuristic alarm clock that monitors sleep patterns and waits for the sleeper to be in the best possible phase before rousing him.

The gadget, SleepSmart, exploits the discovery that sleep patterns are repeated approximately every 90 minutes, with a cycle of light sleep, deep sleep and rapid-eye-movement (REM) sleep, during which we dream most fully, New Scientist says.

The point in that cycle in which you wake can affect how you feel when you wake up—and being roused during the light sleep phase means you are likelier to wake up perky.

Brainwave patterns

Using a headband equipped with electrodes and a microprocessor, SleepSmart records the distinct pattern of brainwaves produced during each phase of sleep and transmits the data to a clock unit near the bed.

The user programs the clock with the latest time at which he wants to be wakened. The alarm then goes off during the last light-sleep phase before the deadline.

The idea for SleepSmart came from a group of students at Brown University, Rhode Island, who have formed a company to promote their invention.

"They have almost finished a protype and plan to market the product by next year," the British weekly science magazine reports. *AFP*

Beware of floaters, flashes in your vision

THE SMALL dots, spots, cobwebs, clouds, "mosquitoes," or curly lines which you may sometimes see in your vision are called floaters. They flit in and out of your field of view. Their technical name is *muscae voltantes*, or flying flies. Often, you may see them against a plain background or when swimming underwater with your eyes open.

Most often, floaters are expected degenerative or aging changes within the vitreous gel or jelly inside your eye.

However, floaters may be warning signs of a serious retinal problem called a retinal break, hole or tear since the particle floating may be parts of the retina or may be red blood cells, indicative of bleeding inside the eye.

According to the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology (PAO), the easiest analogy is to think of the eye as a coconut. There is a jelly-like fluid inside, called the vitreous. There is a lining, like the white meat of the coconut, called the retina. And there is a stem—the optic nerve that connects the eyeball to the brain.

A retinal hole may be similar to scraping the coco meat with a spoon and allowing the piece to float in the coco juice. This type of floater requires urgent attention because a retinal hole or tear or break may lead to a serious problem called retinal detachment.

Unfortunately, a patient cannot determine if the floaters are those associated with degeneration (aging) or those associated with a retinal problem. He must go to his eye doctor for a retinal check called retinal screening (RS).

Floaters are often seen by nearsighted people or those who have had a cataract operation. Floaters, which start as hair-like strands and gradually progress to cover the entire field of view, are often seen in bleeding retinas such as those with diabetes, previous eye attacks (vein occlusions) retinal tears or other inflammatory disorders.

Treatment

What can be done about floaters? There is no known eye drop treatment for floaters. After being thoroughly screened by your eye doctor, and eye defects have been ruled out, floaters are considered benign. These floaters often become bothersome with vision and reading, and are irritating at the most. They may lessen in time or float out of view.

If, however, a retinal tear is present, laser treatment is now possible and available in most medical centers. The hole is sealed, thus preventing a retinal detachment.

If bleeding occurs due to advanced diabetes of the eye, or what eye doctors call diabetic retinopathy, laser of the retina may be done to prevent further loss of vision.

Flashes

Aside from floaters, many of us may also see flashes of light in our vision. Flashes may be multiple and of low intensity like Christmas blinking lights or they may be quite bright. The light flashes may appear on and off for many weeks or months.

Most of the time, they may be simple aging processes associated with changes in the vitreous gel of the eye and have no serious consequences. But they may also be associated with retinal holes or tears which need urgent attention from your eye doctor.

The jelly inside a child's eye is very much like a clear gelatin ball. You can hold it in your hand. As age creeps in, the gel liquefies, like leaving the gelatin in the sun. As it liquefies, it collapses. As it collapses one sees the cellular debris as floaters. The liquid now begins to swish around, and as it pulls on the walls of the eye, the patient may see flashes.

One should get to know your flashes and floaters. Observation should be noted if they are increasing in number, size, and or frequency. With either a flash alone or a floater or in combination, a visit to your eye doctor would be needed. Remember to distinguish between an eye doctor (one who takes care of the eye and its diseases) and an optometrist (one who takes care of prescription/corrective glasses only).

Aloe vera juice now available nationwide

IF THERE were any plant on earth that is of most use to humans it would be, without doubt, the aloe vera. Unfortunately, if asked to reel off what we know about this plant, most likely the only thing we can say is that it is a spiky green plant with gooey clear liquid that comes from its cactus-like leaves. Other than that, most of us don't have much knowledge as to the history, uses and benefits of aloe vera to the human body.

Aloe vera, also called as the "Lily of the Desert," "Plant of Immortality" and "The Medicine Plant," has around 300 to 500 varieties of the Aloe plant. Aloe vera's nutritional qualities and antioxidant properties, together with its anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial actions, make it an amazing medicinal herb when taken internally. Aloe vera also improves blood circulation, prevents coronary heart disease, relieves gastrointestinal problems, works as an antioxidant, aids in digestion, is a natural laxative and aids in kidney and liver functions.

Before we go out and start chewing on an aloe vera leaf, the good news is that there is a delicious and refreshing health drink made from the finest species of aloe vera. This is OKF Aloe Vera Juice, an alternative health drink that not only tastes great but is easy on the pocket as well!

OKF Aloe Vera Juice is an all-natural drink with no sugar added and if that isn't enough, you can also enjoy its pulp bits that are high in calcium and vitamins C and E. This makes OKF Aloe Vera Juice a good source of powerful antioxidants that improve the immune system function, promote skin health and protect the cardiovascular system.

Drink to your good health now and go for OKF Aloe Vera Juice which comes in ready-to-drink cans, and in 500 ml and 1.5 L bottles. OKF Aloe Vera Juice is available in SM Supermarkets, Mercury Drug stores, Robinsons, Ever Supermarkets, Puregold, Waltermart and other major supermarkets and groceries nationwide.

Messages

Malacañan Palace
Manila

I convey my warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Heart Association, Inc. on the occasion of your 36th Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting.

Your participation is vital in the success of our national aspirations for a better quality of life. May this event with the theme, "Confluence of Competencies for Progress in Cardiovascular Medicine," inspire you all to upgrade your services and competencies to world standards for your advancement and for the well-being of the people you serve.

It is important that we focus on the fundamental needs of our people which include their health, education and livelihood. I am glad to have you as our partner in the overriding goal of uplifting the health and quality of life of every Filipino.

I wish the success of all your projects and endeavors. I hope that this gathering will strengthen our partnership towards excellent cardiovascular care to our people.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President
Republic of the Philippines

* * *

Department of Health

I convey my warm felicitations to the officers and members of the Philippine Heart Association (PHA), Inc. as they hold their 36th Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting with the theme "Confluence of Competencies for Progress in Cardiovascular Medicine".

Throughout the years, your association has played an important role in the development and improvement in the capabilities of our medical specialists involved in the management, and treatment of cardiovascular diseases and other heart-related services in the country.

As you celebrate your 38 years of valuable achievements and gains, I exhort you to continually seek positive strategies and future projects that will mold a healthy and productive society.

The Department of Health extends its support to PHA in strengthening the capabilities and expertise of its members to respond to the health needs of our people.

Congratulations and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Manuel M. Dayrit, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health

* * *

Philippine Heart Association

Welcome to the 36th Philippine Heart Association (PHA) Annual Convention which is pivoted on the theme "Confluence of Competencies for Progress in Cardiovascular Medicine".

Living in this millennium and belonging to this milieu offer a myriad of merits. We exist in a borderless world which is synonymous with new scientific approaches, medical breakthroughs, technological advances, landmark trials and latest research studies, among others. The Scientific Committee designed scientific sessions, symposia and lectures that are thought-provoking and attuned with the demands of the times.

Side by side with all the modernization is the sagging Philippine economy triggered by political uncertainty, continuous crude oil price hike in the world market and the backing out of foreign investors.

As doctors, we can give our patients' peso more mileage by being diligent in evaluating their cases and judicious in the use of diagnostic and therapeutic tools. New knowledge has to be applied properly. This is where recently formulated competencies and guidelines should find relevance in our practice. Then and now, the prestige and vitality of the PHA can be seen in its long-demonstrated capability to draw and mobilize support from its Councils, Committees, Chapters, and allied specialty societies and practically all sectors of society — an act that ultimately translates to better service to the entire Filipino nation.

With our concerted efforts, dynamism and passion as a team, actively participating in resolving touchy issues in cardiac medicine, and giving the limping healthcare system more muscle, we see the PHA making another remarkable feat and we will all steer the PHA to soar to greater heights.

Attending scientific meetings can be both knowledge-enriching and nerve-wracking. After each day of stimulating lectures and symposia, let's all look forward to a letting-your-hair-down-party. We will be in for a taste of the magnificent Mexican-Latin cultures which has semblance with that of the Filipinos'.

Mabuhay Tayong Lahat!

Cesar S. Recto II, MD, FPCP, FPCC
Over-All Chairman
Organizing Committee

Efren R. Vicaldo, MD, FPCP, FPCC
Scientific Committee Coordinator

Norbert Lingling D. Uy, MD, FPCP, FPCC
President

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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36th Annual Convention

"Confluence of Competencies for Progress in Cardiovascular Medicine"

EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City, May 25-28, 2005

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PROGRAM-AT-A-GLANCE

TIME	Wednesday May 25	Thursday May 26	Friday May 27	Saturday May 28
7:30 8:00 - 9:00	REGISTRATION *Lower Ground Floor* PRE CONVENTION (Isla 2) *Healthy Lifestyle Begets Healthy Heart, Youthful Body*	BREAKFAST Satellite Symposia [illegible] SESSION 1 TACHYARRHYTHMIAS Presentor Dr. Marilou P. Maglana Panelists Dr. William T. Chua, Dr. Anthony B. King Jr., Dr. [illegible] S. Abcardo SESSION 2 BRADYARRHYTHMIAS Presentor Dr. [illegible] Panelists Dr. Giselle G. Domingo, Dr. John C. Añonuevo, Dr. Jose Carlo A. [illegible] SANOFI-AVENTIS (Isla 2) [illegible] SESSION 1. UPDATE ON EUROPA: The Results of the PERTINENT substudy Speaker Dr. [illegible] SESSION 2 2004 ACC/AHA Guidelines on Antithrombotic Therapy in Atrial Fibrillation Speaker Dr. Ma. Belen O. Carisma SESSION 3 EPHESUS Trial on Heart Failure Speaker Dr. [illegible] SESSION 4 A Call for ACTION Speaker Dr. Eugenio B. Reyes (Isla 1)	MEET THE EXPERTS GLOBAL IMPACT OF OBESITY [illegible] (Isla 2) Dr. [illegible] MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC HEART FAILURE [illegible] (Isla 1) Dr. [illegible]	PLENARY LECTURE 3 (Isla 2) Development of Cardiovascular Nurse Specialist in the Philippines Ms. Ma. Linda G. Buhat, RN, EdD 8:00 - 9:00 am
9:00 - 9:45		DR. HOMOBONO B. CALLEJA PROFESSORIAL LECTURE Cell Therapy for Ischemic Heart Disease Dr. Suphachai Chaithiraphan (Isla 2)	PLENARY LECTURES 1 Interheart Study (9:00-9:22 am) Dr. [illegible] (Isla 2) Value of Research & Development (9:22-9:45 am) Dr. Ramon A. Dumagpaw (Isla 2)	DR. RODOLFO C. SOTO PROFESSORIAL LECTURE Reconstructive Surgery for Rheumatic Mitral Valve Incompetence: What Techniques Should Be Used? (Isla 2) Dr. Nguyen Van Phan
9:45 - 10:00		Visit Exhibits/Coffee Break Poster Session - A 10:00-11:30 am (Mactan)	Visit Exhibits/Coffee Break Poster Session - C 10:00-11:30 am (Mactan)	Visit Exhibits/Coffee Break
10:00 - 12:00		SIMULTANEOUS Symposia I	PLENARY LECTURES 2 NNHeS 2003-2004 INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY - Dr. Dante D. Morales HYPERTENSION - Dr. Esperanza I. Cabral DYSLIPIDEMIA - Dr. Dante D. Morales SMOKING - Ms. Maria Vanessa G. Villaruz OBESITY - Dr. Rosa Allyn G. Sy DIABETES - [illegible] Elizabeth P. Pacheco ANGINA PECTORIS - Dr. Mariano B. Lopez STROKE - Dr. Artemio A. Roxas Jr. PVC - Dr. Ma. Teresa B. Abola BRUGADA - Dr. Giselle G. Domingo ECG ABNORMALITIES - Dr. Jose P. [illegible] SUMMARY OF RESULTS - Dr. Felix Eduardo R. Punzalan IMPLICATIONS - Dr. Antonio L. Dans (Isla 2)	SIMULTANEOUS Symposia III
10:00 - 10:30		Guidelines for Echocardiography (Isla 3) Dr. Joel M. [illegible] A Nationwide Survey on Morbidity and Mortality Among Hospital-based population (Phase 4) (Isla 1) Dr. Jorge A. Sison		Heart Rate as Parameter of Cardiac Function (Isla 3) Dr. William T. Chua Cardiac MRI (Isla 1) Dr. Kenneth Tan
10:30 - 11:00		The 2004 Philippine Clinical Practice Guidelines on Dyslipidemia (Isla 3) Dr. Eugenio B. Reyes The National Heart Failure Registry Program (P.E.A.R. Heart) (Isla 1) Dr. Jesus [illegible]		EPS and Its Role in CVD Management (Isla 3) Dr. Edgardo S. Timbol Intravascular Ultrasound: The View From Within (Isla 1) Dr. Ariel A. Miranda
11:00 - 11:30	MEDIA FORUM (Isla 1) Women Power vs CVD Menace	Guidelines on Setting Up a Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (Isla 3) Dr. Marisa P. Jimeno Will Interventional Cardiology Replace Cardiac Surgery? (Isla 1) Dr. Manuel T. Chua Chiaco Jr.		Approach to the Diagnosis and Management of Syncope (Isla 3) Dr. Giselle G. Domingo Normal Echocardiographic Values Among Filipinos (Isla 1) Dr. Mary Ong-Go
11:30 - 12:00		Philippine Guidelines for Periodic Health Examination: Effective Screening for CVD Among Apparently Healthy Filipinos (Isla 3) Dr. Dante D. Morales Surgical Options for the Failing Ventricle: Should We Offer More to Our Filipino Patients? (Isla 1) Dr. Gerardo S. Manzo		Sleep Apnea and CVDs (Isla 3) Dr. Ruth M. Divinagracia Nursing Practice in the Management of Acute Coronary Syndrome (Isla 1) Ms. Carmencita A. Lingan
12:00 - 2:00	LUNCH Satellite Symposia PFIZER (Isla 3) (Isla 2) (Isla 1)	LUNCH Satellite Symposia [illegible] (Isla 3) ASTRA ZENECA (Isla 2) [illegible] (Isla 1) [illegible] (Garden) RF-RHD Annual Meeting *Mindoro*	LUNCH Satellite Symposia PFIZER (Isla 3) MERCK (Isla 2) SOLVAY (Isla 1) PHA Research Hour	LUNCH Satellite Symposia THERAPHARMA (Isla 3) SCHERING PLOUGH (Isla 2) CORBRIDGE (Isla 1)
2:00 - 3:00	REGISTRATION CONVOCATION AND OPENING OF EXHIBITS Dr. Mariano M. Alimurung Lecture (Isla 2) Dr. Rafael R. Castillo	SIMULTANEOUS Symposia II	Poster Session - D (Mactan 1 & 2) Oral Presentation (Isla 3) Dr. Francisco F. Tangco Young Investigator's Award (Isla 1)	Symposia IV Medico-Legal Aspects in Cardiology (Isla 2) Dr. Ilu C. Castro
2:00 - 2:30		Diabetes in CAD: The Honeymoon Period (Isla 3) Dr. Romeo D. Saavedra Impact of Obesity in Children: Its Multifactoral Problems Panel Discussion (Isla 1) (Panelists) Dr. [illegible] Dr. Jean Villareal-Gomo Dr. Ana Maria Edvina S. Cabrera		
2:30 - 3:00		Depression in Cardiac Patients (Isla 3) Dr. Norieta C. Balderrama		Shaping the Philippine Medical Practice through Technology (Isla 2) Mr. Christopher A. Stolk
3:00 - 3:30		Visit Exhibits/Coffee Break Poster Session - B 3:00-4:30 pm (Mactan)	Visit Exhibits/Coffee Break	Visit Exhibits/Coffee Break
3:30 - 4:00		Updates in the Management of Peripheral Vascular Disease (Isla 3) Dr. Maribeth T. De Los Santos (3:00-3:30) Nutritional Deficiencies in Children with Heart Disease (Isla 1) Dr. Aurora S. Gamponia Dr. Jean Villareal-Gomo (Reactor)	Annual Business Meeting 3-5 pm (Isla 2)	Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy (Isla 2) Dr. Bun Yok O. Dy
4:00 - 4:30		Updates on Endothelial Dysfunction (Isla 3) Dr. Eduardo S. Caguioa (3:30-4:00) Surgical Options for Tetralogy of Fallot Dr. Reynante T. Gamponia PSPC Annual Meeting (Mindoro)		Highlights of Scientific Sessions (Isla 2) Dr. Efren R. Vicaldo 5:00 pm PHA Thanksgiving Mass (Isla 3)
5:00 - 7:00		DINNER Satellite Symposia (THERAPHARMA) (Isla Ballroom)	DINNER Satellite Symposia PFIZER (Isla 3) MSD (Isla 2) Boie Takeda (Isla 1)	CLOSING CEREMONIES CHAPTERS' NIGHT (Isla 2)
7:00	Fellowship Night Isla Ballroom	Alumni Homecoming UP-PGH Alumni PHC Alumni [illegible] Book Launching	Presidents' Night Mindoro	

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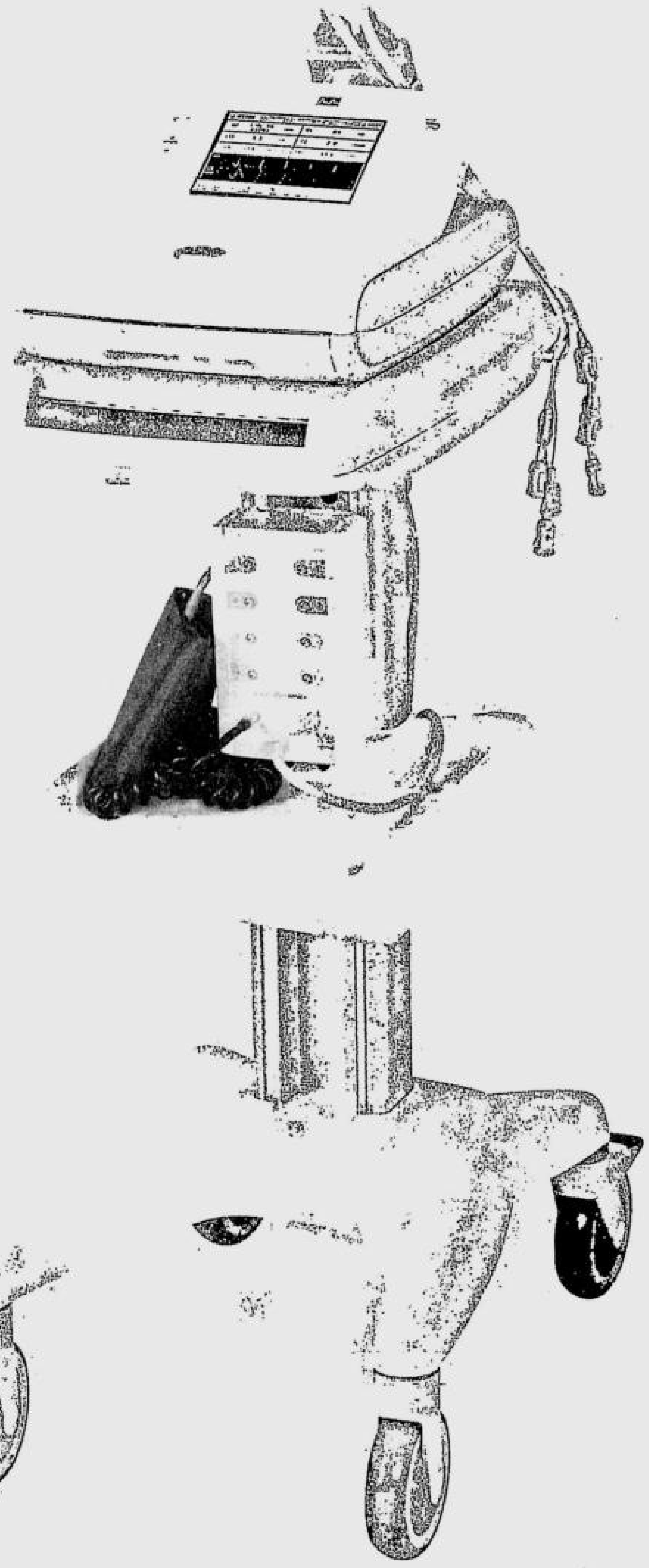

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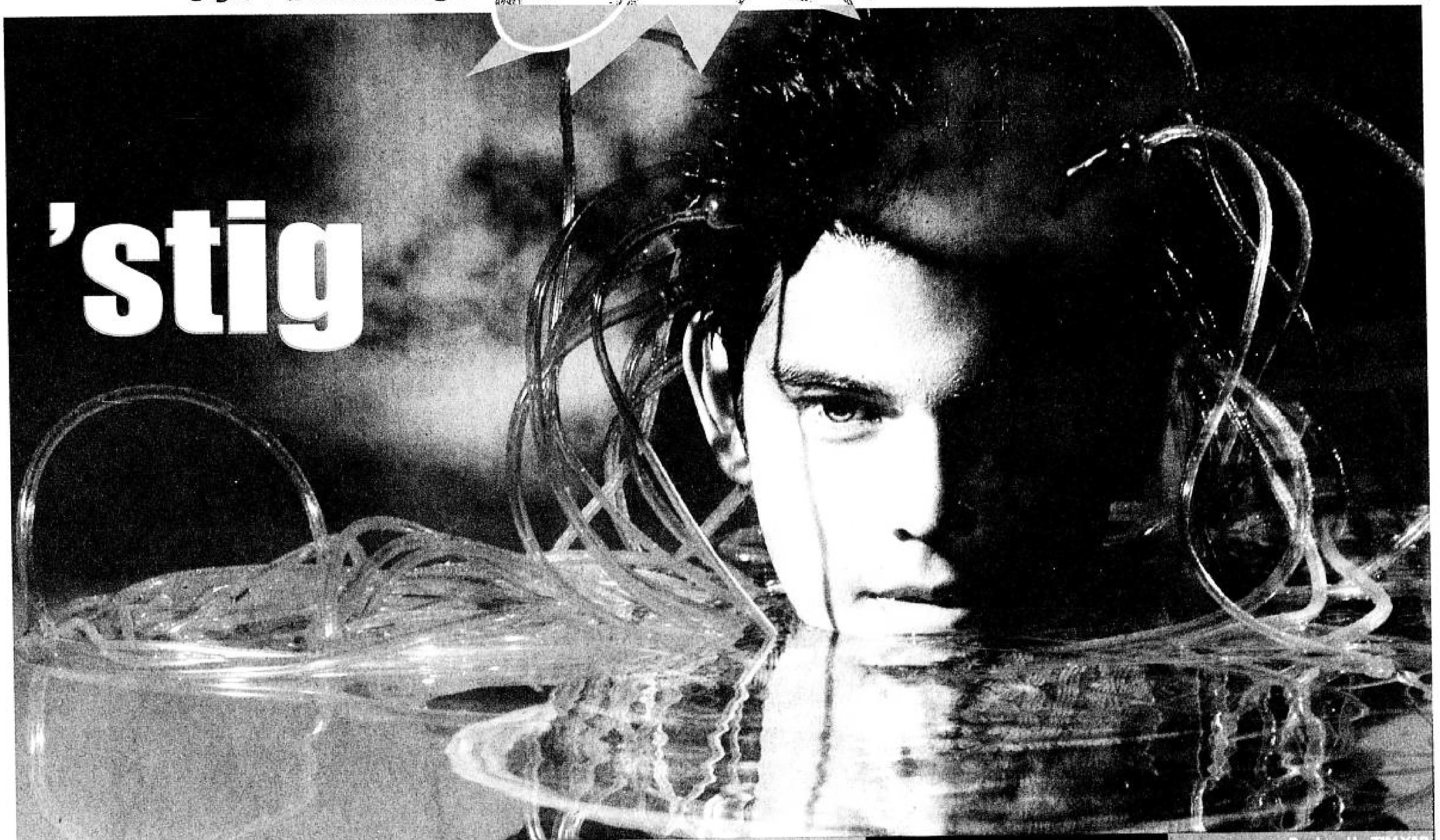

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Manila fashion festival flavors page F1

Luna-chic awards highlights page G3

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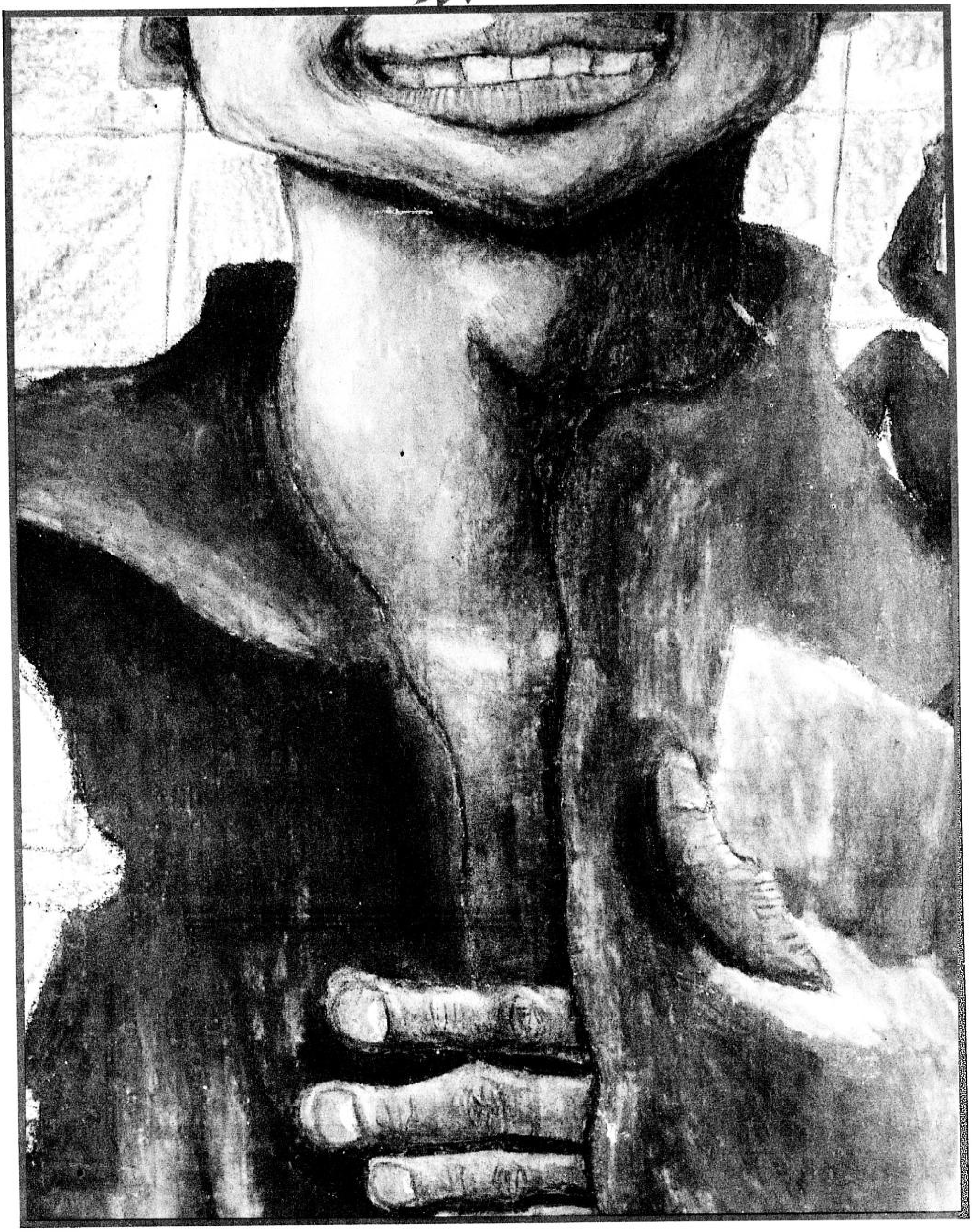


Pinoy cool

Yes there is a lot for Filipinos to be proud of and not just what you are thinking

By Katrina Holigores
Original artwork by Jason Moss

NOBODY really wants to admit to being *baduy*. In fact, I still have to find the exact English translation of the word. Maybe the closest would be uncool.

Most of us want to be cool or at least be deemed cool, popular or hip. There are those who say they are rebels, not realizing that, in their rebellion, they are, of course, still wanting to be cool.

Does that make any sense? Sure it does. We would be hard pressed to find someone who does not care to be a model of *baduy*-ness. Wanting to be different or not part of a crowd doesn't mean you DON'T want to be cool. In fact, NOT being part of a crowd could make you the absolute icon of cool.

(Yawn) Really. Enough. The last thing I'm sure you need is a lesson on what's cool and what's not. Besides, I'm not an expert on either; I just know what I like, whether it's en Vogue or en Liwayway.

Theme for this weekend is Filipino pride, and yes there is a lot to be proud of but I don't want to talk about the usual. When asked what makes the Philippines beautiful, you will probably hear: Boracay's white sands, Banaue's rice terraces, Bohol's Chocolate Hills and *butanding*-watching in Donsol, Sorsogon. Truly a list that meets international standards (applause). I hope none of the above gets crossed out of the list for environmental reasons and people's apathy.

Now, here is my own list: beauty pageants, *bading* speak, *bideoke* (ok, I'm pushing it) and Bulagaan 2005. Ah, I can see eyes roll. I do feel MY list also extols true beauty.

Now before you stop reading, allow me to defend my choices.

Pageants

What I am most proud of about being part of a race that has gone through more than its share of coups (huh again?) and EDSA movements (huh again?) is its sense of humor.

Honestly, beauty pageants are probably among the most entertaining forms of gaming known to people. From the minute a child can walk it should also be able to wear a tiara and a sash. Gender is irrelevant; there are more than enough categories to go around.

The coup de grace of any pageant is always the question and answer portion. Some of the responses from the prettiest faces are quoted more often than passages from the Scripture.

Most of us have probably laughed till we cried at how Miss........ from ....City answered a final question. Some contestants can have a future in stand-up comedy, and should get a crown.

Bading speak

Unless you are new in town *bading* is the current popular term for "bakla", euphorically happy man who loves other men or euphorically happy woman who loves other women. Knowing some gay speak gives a little cachet that can get you in the company of movers and shakers in popular media.

It has become a growing personal obsession to discover the beginnings of some words because I feel that most reflect humor, and a bit of genius. Tolkien did it with LOTR, taking words from several languages to come up with Elvish (no, not the singer, but the language spoken by elves).

Creators of Swardspeak deserve a limp- wristed, cologne-dabbed pat on the back. *Chika!*

Bideoke

Ok, videoke (hey, our ex colonizers pronounced "V" and "B" the same way), video and karaoke. The passion for singing and well, singing EVERYWHERE is a source of pride. Bursting into song has never been so easy, and you can attract an appreciative (or angry) crowd even without a recording contract. Being self-conscious is a non-issue. Class and the risk of being laughed at are irrelevant.

Filipinos love to sing, and like just as much making fun of others who sing. Of course, unless they are blessed with perfect pitch, they may also be the ones being laughed at. But in a videoke group, it may seem like they are laughing with you... ignorance can be bliss.

Phenomenon

Bulagaan 2005 is a comic skit in what I can safely say is a phenomenon in Philippine noontime viewing, Eat Bulaga. Call it whatever you want, it is a show that has lasted longer than some networks. If Helen of Troy launched a thousand ships, this show has launched a thousand skits.

Bulagaan is a classic, a classroom full of students singing for a passing grade. Despite the jokes being gloriously corny, "Sir, I have a knock knock", and most of the singing close to atrocious, it just works. It connects, it has a following, and it combines everything on my list: beauty contests (or pretty hosts), *bading*, *bideoke* and plain old Filipino humor.

Yes, it's *baduy* at its best. Those of you who raise a threaded eyebrow at me, here's a pie in your face. (canned maniacal laughter)

From royal to punk to thieves and girls who are not girls

All CDs are available at Music One and Tower Records

By Albert Pili

UNLESS the blistering heat has already burnt you to a crisp, these babies ought to cool you down. From the downright cerebral to the utterly sophisticated, we have a listening list that will cater to your every fancy.

NEW ORDER

Waiting For The Sirens' Call

Stylish as ever, the New Order outdo themselves this time as they ricochet with the jumpy "Krafty," a pulsating anthem that—surprisingly—shouts out the drudgery of a nine-to-five life.

Bernard Sumner still sings and plays his guitar in a boyish manner. Admittedly, he did write some very crappy lyrics this time ("The world is a beautiful place/With mountains, lakes and the human race").

But the key to Sirens is his sincerity, the way he sings horrific poetry that a smarter artist would not even think of.

Of course, Sumner would be nothing without Peter Hook and drummer Stephen Morris.

Newly drafted Phil Cunningham piles on an extra layer of guitar, most extensively on the burning "Morning Night And Day." The Scissor Sisters' Ana Matronic showcases her inimitable style in the flaming track "Jetstream." It would seem that Sumner and Hook's recent association with Harajuku girl Gwen Stefani developed a liking for boisterous non-Englishmen.

"Waiting for the Sirens' Call" cashes in on the New Order's biggest dancefloor hit since "Blue Monday," the intoxicating "Guilt Is a Useless Emotion." Moving through "Turn," that will have you bobbing your head, it screeches to a stop with the drum-intensive "Working Overtime."

Non-fans and other listeners may take this as their cue to leave. But those of us who believe, wait with mouths agape for the music to start again. We relish the moment and let the synth-pop academics of New Order hit us one more time.

DAFT PUNK

Human After All

They've always been one of the most adaptable and comprehensible acts in the dance music scene, straddling the unyielding rhythm of Homework and the luxurious and expansive Discovery with distinctive intelligence and lightheartedness that made rabid fans out of both electronica diehards and indie rockers.

The much-awaited "Human after All" maintains that lightheartedness. And even if the album was produced in just six weeks, it contains exactly what the group is known for: the infinite palette of synths, vocoders and guitars.

Several songs in "Human after All" contemplate recurring themes. "Steam Machine" begins strongly with a low drum machine thumping and appropriately whispering, and progresses to a complete hit over the course of five minutes.

Repetition and straightforwardness have always been at the core of Daft Punk's sound, and these work absolutely in "Human After All," particularly accurate in "Make Love" and "Emotion," both sweet and suggestive. "Human after All" offers nine whole tracks (10 if you count the 19-seconder "On/Off") and does not really need a lot of complicated analysis to know it rocks. It simply does.

KINGS OF CONVENIENCE

Riot on an Empty Street

The Kings' third full-length release has the pallid Nordic minstrels, with the quiet voices, traipsing past the fast-paced onramp towards an extensive whispery music recollection.

"Riot on an Empty Street" leads with a suggestion of musical comfort. Throughout the album, the Kings justify the quaintly intimate setup as every sound is picked up—from whispers, sighs, strumming, even finger squeaks. Øye and Erik Glambek Bøe's rigid English intonations and perceptive lyrics are the pillars that hold the album steady. This sort of subtle, lazy music never really goes out of style. You could probably hand it to your grand-folks as an anniversary gift and find that they love it as much as their Frank Sinatra records. It's nothing of that sort, of course, but the theme sound in Riot is not fancy, just music that's kind and warm, the kind of music you play as you sip a warm cup of tea while you read the paper.

BRAZILIAN GIRLS

Brazilian Girls

A misnomer really but then their talent gives them poetic license. Brazilian Girls—none of them is Brazilian and there is just a lone girl—fli from genre to genre.

Ricocheting from house music and samba-inspired pop to odd stoner themes seems such an easy task for the Brazilian Girls. And you either tap your feet or bob your head to the beat.

From the dreamy "Lazy Lover" to '80s kitsch homage "Long" and the zone-out ditty "Don't Stop," "Brazilian Girls" is brilliant and lovely, to say the very least. Immensely good stuff, it's all about the laid-back groove, with a light sprinkling of transcontinental elegance, plus traipsing house beats, and multilingual embellishments.

Outstanding, sexy, and absolutely highly recommended.

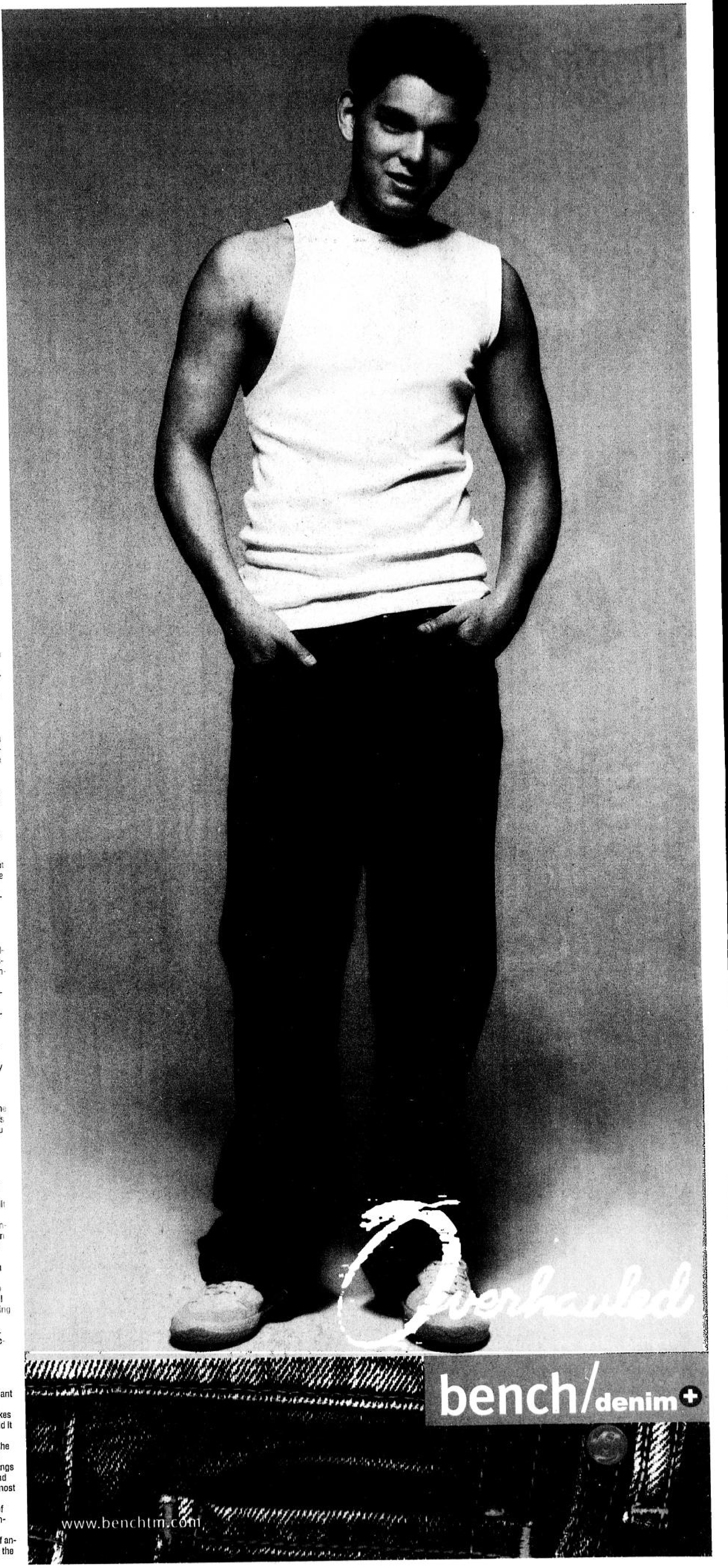
THIEVERY CORPORATION

The Cosmic Game

Yes, all the ingredients are present—incessant electronic beats, gentle Brazilian tones—but something has been added to the mix that makes "The Cosmic Game" extremely delicious. Could it be the sincerity of the record? Perhaps.

Marking an invigorating return to form for the Thievery Corporation production team of Rob Garza and Eric Hilton, "The Cosmic Game" brings together a cosmic troupe of guest vocalists and collaborators to help the duo construct their most solid and entrancing record to date.

And though their trademark convergence of laid-back trip-hop and untailored musical fashioning initially appear as quiet as ever, underneath the pseudo-quietude are suggestions of antagonism, cynicism and disaffection that give the album passion and energy.



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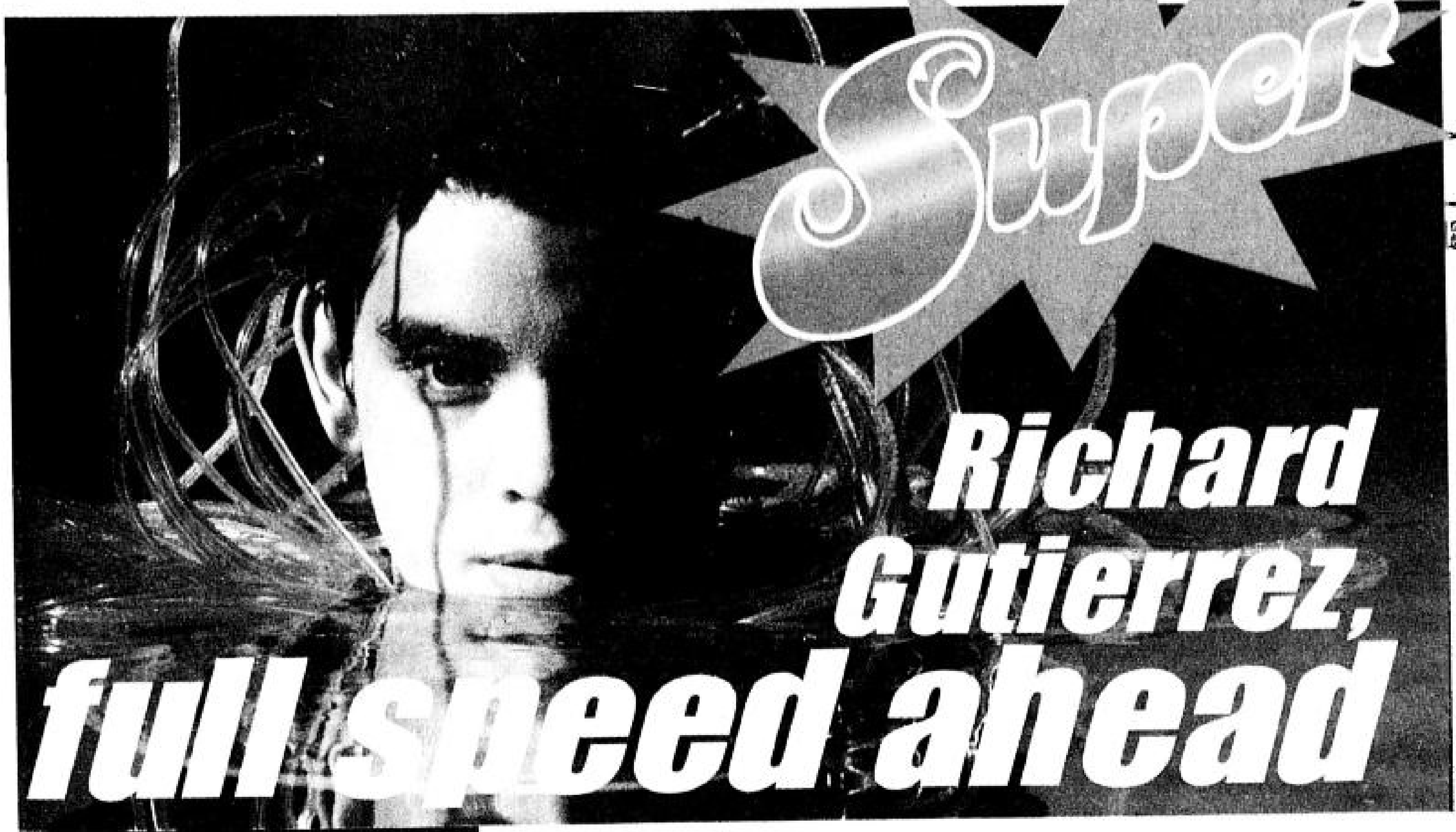
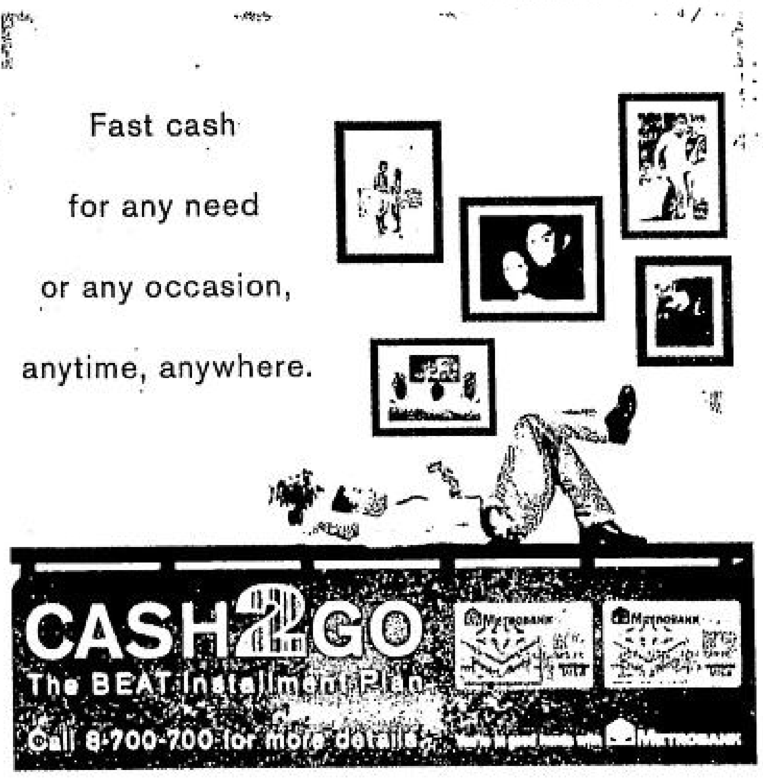


Richard Gutierrez, full speed ahead



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Tim Yap

FROM flying high as local caped crusader Mulawin, Richard Gutierrez pours his passions into a new hobby—drag racing. Legal drag racing, that is.

Yes, he is into speed. The pace of his youthful years, constantly trailed by show biz spotlight, may seem to be frenetic, but I sense this inner calm in the glitz biz industry's matinee idol du jour.

If there's one thing I've learned from being surrounded by celebrities, it is that what you see is not exactly what you get. In Richard's case, he may seem standoffish and aloof, but deep down he has this passion to make it and an intensity that fuels him to do more than what is expected of him.

Just before this shoot with creative masterminds Mark Nicdao and Millet Arzaga, he was in a story conference for a new soap for his home network. In between takes, he wore a rosary around his neck. His bag is full of religious paraphernalia which he brings along wherever he goes. "I guess I've gotten more religious at this stage of my life."

Rich, the event planner

Right now, he has dipped his hand into event planning, starting with this gig, a legal drag racing at the PRA Promenade on Macapagal Ave. A car show with 'Chard's celebrity friends participating, a hip hop dance party and, get this, a bikini car wash to rev things up.

"Before, when I was in high school, I raced on the streets. We hear so many things about the dangers of drag racing, so we tied up with the Philippine Drag Racing Federation to make sure everything is safe and legal," Richard says in a calm tone.

"It was always my dream to organize events—so my brothers and I thought of organizing something for the youth. Finally, now that I have the time, I am making the most of it."

As I write this article, this sport freak and car enthusiast is fixing last-minute kinks in preparations for the big day. The event ends today.

"I've always wanted to do something outside acting to prove that I am not just a guy who comes from a show biz clan."

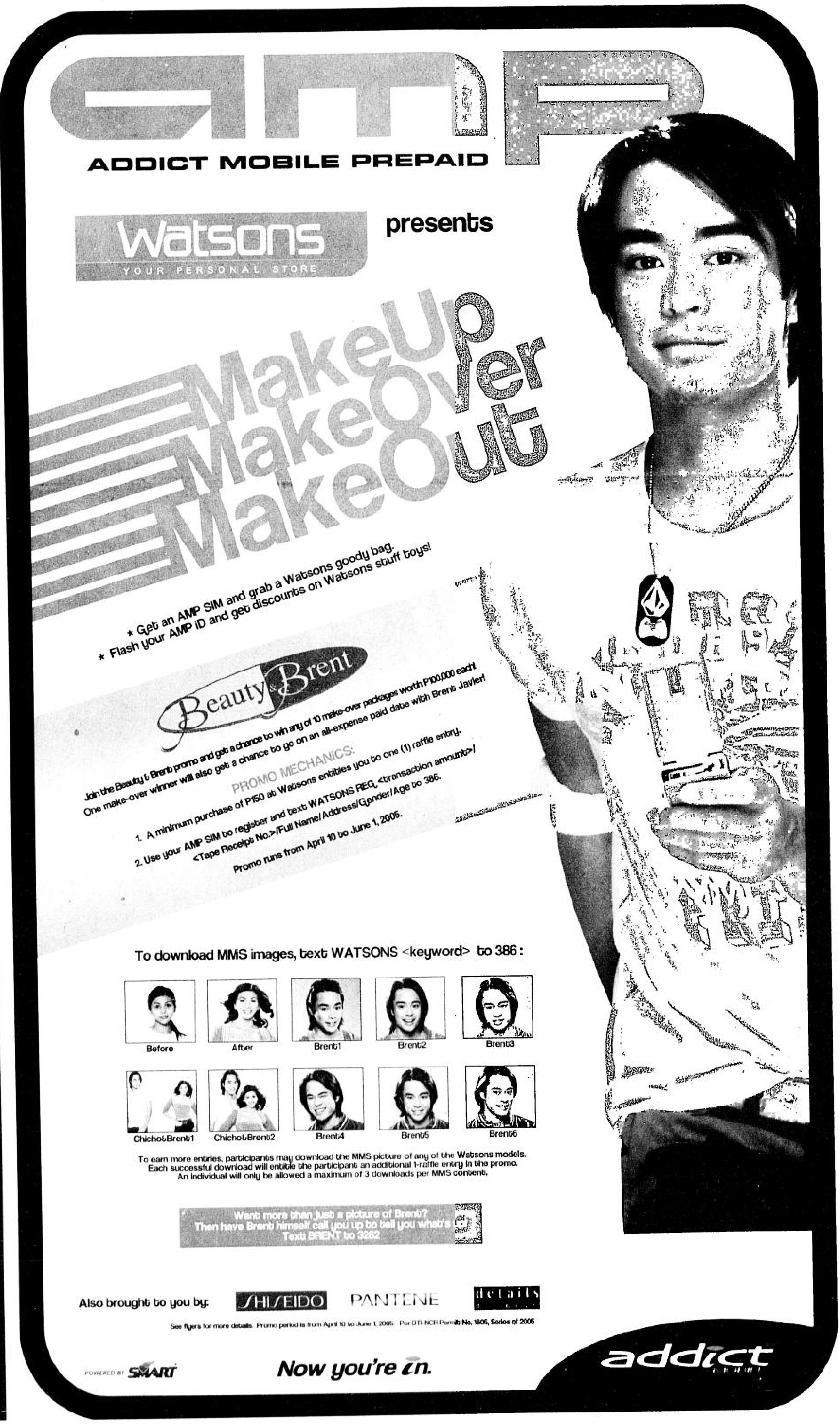
Richard's desire to establish his own identity is evident, even in the simplest of things. *"Ang ganda ng ilong mo, kanino 'yan, kay Eddie o kay Annabelle?"* someone asked him during this exclusive Super! shoot.

"Sa akin," he said, nonchalant.

There is no doubt in our minds that Richard is more than just his parents' son. And he will continue to make sure that we know it.

"I hope to inspire other young people to pursue their dreams. It takes willpower, determination and passion, and a bit of stubbornness to just go for it."

RICHARD/D2



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Richard Gutierrez, full speed ahead

'Ang ganda ng ilong mo ah, kanino yan, kay Eddie o kay Annabelle?' someone asked him during this exclusive Super! shoot. 'Sa akin,' he said.

HIS BAG is full of religious paraphernalia which he brings along wherever he goes. "I guess I've gotten more religious at this stage of my life."

From page D1

The thing about fame is that... it's for people who can handle it.

The thing I love most about what I do is... I get to travel and meet other people. And inspire.

People might be surprised to know that... I will produce my own event and I'm a sport fanatic, too.

The most important thing I've ever learned is that... you don't have to please other people and you just have to be happy with your life.

I wish when I started I was... given a handbook on how to cope with show biz.

The worst thing that ever happened to me is... having people judge you without even knowing the truth.

And this taught me that... I just got to be myself.

The secret to happines is... love and God.

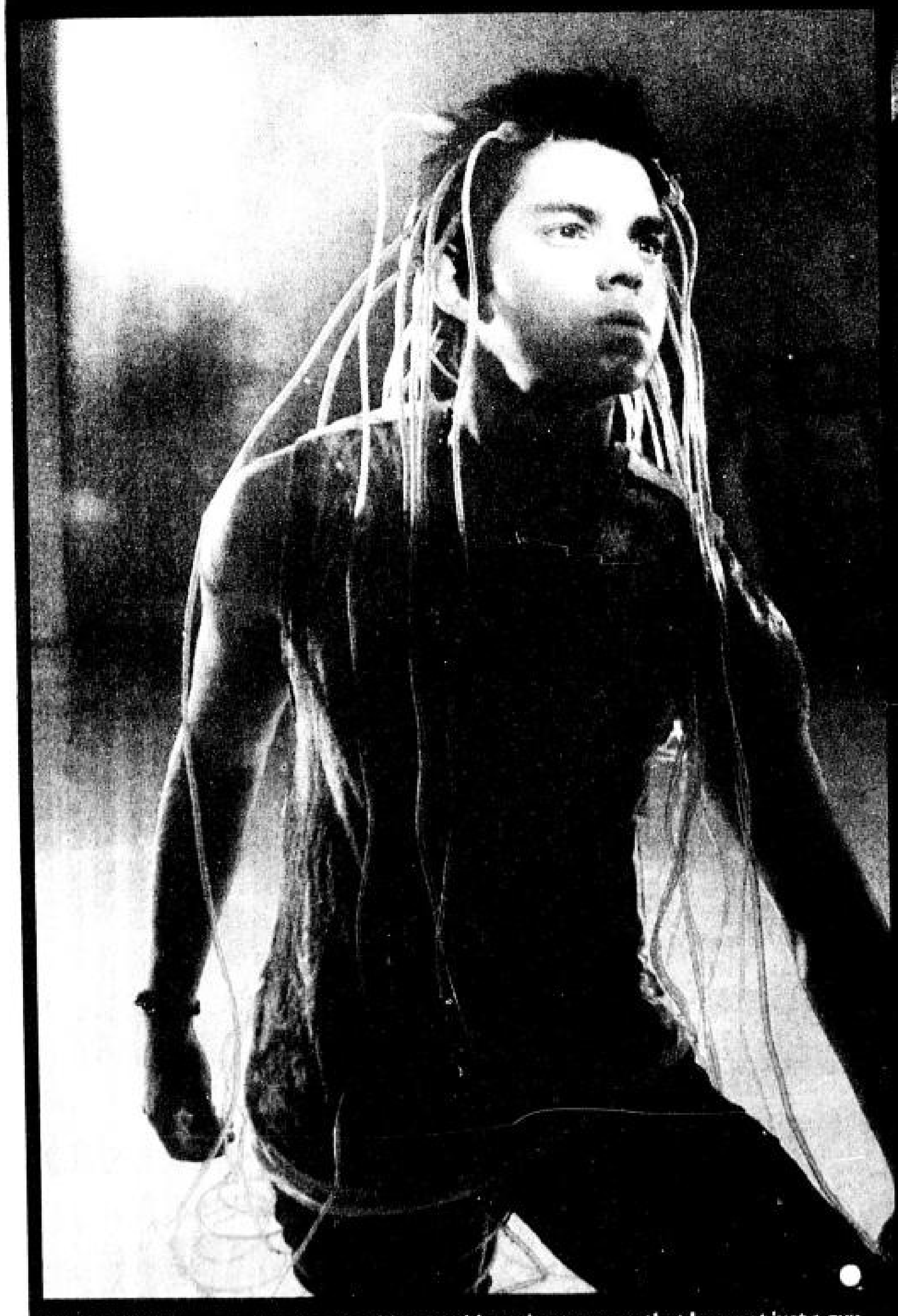
My best ever outfit consisted of... a Randy Ortiz suit and comfortable Bench outfits.

My Super! Saturday night consists of... spending time with my friends: chilling and just hanging out.

The soundtrack of my life would include... "One Love" by Bob Marley.

If I was invisible for a day, I would... sneak into airplanes and travel around the world.

What makes me most angry are... people who try to put me down and bash me without even knowing me.



"I'VE ALWAYS wanted to do something outside acting to prove that I am not just a guy who comes from a show biz clan."

"I HOPE to inspire other young people to pursue their dreams."

If I was the most powerful person on earth I would... put an end to corruption.

The best thing about family is that... no matter what happens, even if the world turns its back on you, they are there to back you up.

When I'm gone, they'll probably say... where is he?

If money was no object, I would... buy a Ferrari, a Lamborghini and a Porsche and race them everyday.

When I retire, I would like to... chill out in the Bahamas, play golf and sip my piña colada.

The world would be a much better place if... people would just be themselves and spread love.

My hero is... Superman.

The thing that makes my life worth living is... being in a position to inspire kids and be looked up to.

My greatest hope for the future is that... the Philippines would improve.

The worst thing somebody said about me was... I was *mayabang*.

My favorite moments were when... I was still in high school.

My most embarrassing moment was when... I made a mistake during my graduation.

I'm saving up for... a nice beach house.

My biggest indulgences are... cars. I'm also setting up a new place.

My current state of mind is... Zen.

If someone would play me in my biopic I would like it to be... Johnny Depp.

My five favorite words are... inspire, motivate, love, reggae iced out.

I aspire to be... a better actor and producer.

Photography/Digital Imaging:
MARK NICDAO, Edge of Light Studio
Concept/Styling: MILLET ARZAGA
Grooming: LOWELL BUENAVENTURA
Sittings editor: DAVID MILAN

"WHAT makes me most angry are people who try to put me down and bash me without even knowing me."

SUPER SELECTIONS

This backpack will lift off in 3, 2, 1...

By Albert Pili

THE APOLLO lunar missions, the invention of the computer and the advent of cyberspace, the discovery of DNA—few scientific breakthroughs have fired up mankind's collective imagination and paved the way for life as we know it. That is, until the expert minds at the JanSport Works research and development laboratory unleashed the JanSport Airlift EXOS, a sleek, sexy and survival-savvy backpack for urban nomads and other denizens of the concrete jungle.

Boasting of patented backpack technologies such as the ergonomic Aero Spacer Back architecture, aggressive Zoned Cushioning system and stress-dispersing EXO-Flight Suspension—not to mention specially-engineered Gelastic Gellycomb on shoulder straps—the JanSport Airlift EXOS indeed epitomizes the future of backpacks.

This hi-tech daypack has been generating buzz across the region since it made its Asian debut in Metro Manila recently. A testament to the growing importance of the Philippine market in the global outdoor goods and fashion industry, launching in our nation's capital was the personal preference of Frank Cancelloni, general manager of VF Asia, the regional distributor of the leading backpack brand. "Filipinos are very sophisticated and always up-to-date with the latest trends and styles," remarked Cancelloni, who also noted VF Asia's robust relationship with local JanSport distributor Uniglobe Travelware Co. Inc. (UTCI). "We have a strong partner [in UTCI] and we look forward to introducing more of JanSport's cutting-edge innovations in the coming years," Cancelloni added.

Stylish urbanites flocked to the Embassy for a first glimpse of the JanSport Airlift EXOS. That evening, the über-hip club morphed into a cyber-chic, wired wonderland with lab coat wearing attendants serving cocktail concoctions and fusion finger food, and JanSport's breakthrough backpacks in full view. Adding a dash of pizzazz to the mad lab ambiance was certified eventologist and Embassy main man Tim Yap.

Guests watched as models clad in trendy streetwear ensembles showed off the latest backpacks from JanSport's Street Tech, Academic, Sporty, Adventurous and Techie collections. The one-of-a-kind fashion show culminated with edgy personalities Juddha Paolo and MTV VJ Marc Abaya strutting their stuff down the catwalk, with JanSport Airlift Exos in tow. With their independent streak and intense passions, these two urban warriors exemplify the pioneering spirit of the JanSport Airlift EXOS.

And to be able to savor the revolutionary JanSport experience, guests brought home a premium backpack each, with one lucky audience member winning the coveted JanSport Airlift EXOS raffle prize. The hi-tech high life continued well into the wee hours of the morning, as guests partied in celebration of JanSport's hippest backpack breakthrough to-date.

JanSport Airlift EXOS is available in selected BratPack branches in SM North Edsa, SM Southmall, Robinson's Galleria and Robinson's Place Manila, as well as in The Travel Club stores in Shangri-la Plaza, SM Megamall, Alabang Town Center and Glorietta Makati. Join a new breed of urban nomads and take the first step into a new era of backpacks.

hp

HP brings it on in Make it REAL! Make it HP! consumer technology event

HP Philippines pulls out all the stops as it unleashes their latest line-up of digital entertainment and digital photography products in grandiose fashion where consumers will have a chance to see and experience the best gadgets in the market today.

On May 27 to 29, 2005, from 10am to 9pm, the Atrium of the Shangri-La Mall in EDSA, will be turned into one big gadget haven where you can see, feel and try out HP's wide range of digital photography and digital entertainment products including printers, handhelds, digicams and computers in HP's biggest, most elaborate IT consumer event for the year entitled "MAKE IT REAL! MAKE IT HP! - A Technology Event for Everybody."

Treat yourself to three days of fun-filled activities, including games, photo opportunities with celebrities, face painting, and a fashion show. Adding more spunk to the event are live performances by Luke Mijares, Thor, MYMP, K 24-7, DJ Sir Scratch and Kyla.

Exciting prizes will also be given away to lucky visitors, including HP digital cameras, photo printers, and iPAQs!

As one of the highlights of the event, HP will also hold the iPAQ Trade In, Trade Up promo. Get a chance to own the best in mobile handhelds like the iPAQ 6365 and other exciting iPAQ models for as much as Php10,000 off when you trade in any working or non-working PDAs or GSM mobile phones (with battery and charger).

Plus, get other great deals on the spot, including:
- Get an R607 Photosmart camera when you buy an HP dv1012 notebook!
- Free ink when you buy any of the selected HP printers and save as much as Php1,000!

The event will be held in partnership with PLDT MyDSL, Shangri-la Plaza Mall, Monster Radio RX 93.1, 96.3 WRocK, 105.9 Crossover, Joey 92.3, NU 107, JAM 88.3, Wave 89.1, RT, Mellow Touch and 90.7 Love Radio.

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About HP
HP is a technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions globally. The company's offerings span IT infrastructure, global services, business and home computing, and imaging and printing. For the four fiscal quarters ended Jan. 31, 2005, HP revenue totaled $81.8 billion. More information about HP (NYSE, Nasdaq: HPQ) is available at www.hp.com.

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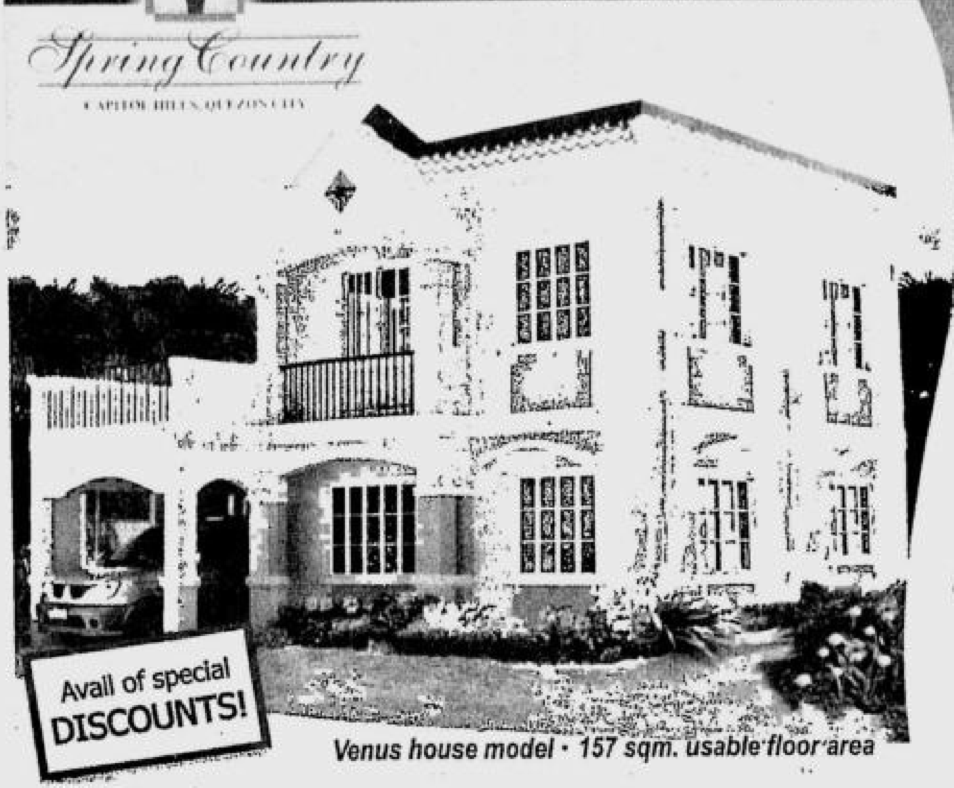

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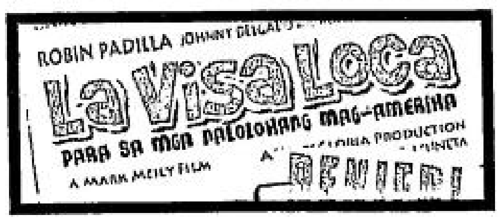
Two Pinoy films with enough guts to go up against Star Wars

BIKINI OPEN


ROBIN PADILLA JOHNNY DELGADO
La Visa Loca
PARA SA MGA NALOLOKANG MAG-AMERIKA
A MARK MEILY FILM
PRODUCTION
PREMIERE

So Star Wars opened last Thursday—this means theaters are gonna be packed for the next two weeks or so. Assuming of course that Darth Vader still has some Pinoy Padwans.

But Super! invites y'all to catch two Pinoy films that are opening this week 'cause, though they both have infinitely less hype, they mean a lot more to you and us than the Revenge of the Sith.

The past few eons, you've heard all this bitching about how dead our film industry already is. Super! minions, this is our chance to show ourselves it isn't.

It is our plea and the plea of many others that you troop to theaters this week to catch these two Pinoy gems, 'Bikini Open' and 'La Visa Loca.'

'Stig.

TIM YAP and his 'Bikini Open' *barkada* at the well-received premiere

Caution: There's a butt

See 'Bikini Open' and don't cover your eyes

By James Gabrillo and Pepe Diokno

THAT'S right—there's a butt. You will see a butt in the movie. But although it's a close-up shot, that's the most explicit thing you'll see in "Bikini Open."

So if you're gonna watch it 'cause you think it's a sex flick with lotsa pumping, it's probably going to be a letdown.

But the great thing is it's more than a sex flick—it's a commentary on the obsession with sex, how media peeps capitalize on human drama and the lack of respect we show each other.

In "Bikini," Cherry Pie Picache plays a scheming, manipulative television host who's forced to spice up her program to get the coveted high ratings. She chooses to cover bikini pageants by focusing on the lives of the people who join them. She shows no respect for their privacy and dignity, barging into their houses, hooking up hidden cameras backstage, catching the contestants at their most vulnerable, and yadda yadda yadda.

Here: we want hosts of public affairs shows and magazine programs on the tube to see this film. We wanna see them squirm in their seats like they are watching their ugly faces in the mirror.

Heck, we want everyone who's on TV to see the film 'cause it is a really accurate display of the media's monstrous intentions.

Acting was fine. Picache did a job as wonderful as morning dew (hmmm...)—but then she always does. The bikini ensemble does well on-screen, too—and they're in bikinis the whole time.

Now, we watched this movie with Super!'s Gino de la Paz and he took two insights from the film: one, the people who join these contests were forced to because of poverty; and two, media people like Cherry Pie's character should be killed. 'Nuff said G—that probably sums up what the audience will take from the film.

Director Jeffrey Jeturian was able to translate Chris Martinez's vision really well into film. And Jeturian's quirks were really evident in the movie.

But the thing is, the film is a screaming fag. We got a gay bar, gay hosts, gay judges, a gay father, a gay contestant, gay assistants, gay everywhere. Now, this might be the intention of Jeffrey—but at the risk of sounding homophobic, it gets really annoying and predictable. Not good.

The film was also...draaaaggggiiinnng (okay, that sounds exaggerated). But it is, really. Jeff could've shortened the looong song-and-dance numbers and the looong question-and-answer portion, and got rid of parts of the pageant that really were not needed.

Another thing, the film says it goes against formula, but all the jokes are formula—we've all heard them before though they do make people laugh. ("Ahaha! Where'd I hear that before?")

Verdict: In the end though, props, praises, popcorn and pizza are deserved and should go out to the "Bikini Open" peeps. The rain is starting to pour, but y'all should take the risk and do the "Bikini."

TWO/ E2

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PHOTOS BY GINO DE LA PAZ, LIZETTE CLUADIO AND RUEL ROSELLO

AKO SI M16. Budoy of Junior Kilat

HEADBANGER'S BALL. Clowning around in the VIP tent with Rivermaya's Mark Escueta, Sugarfree's Ebe Dancel, and Parokya ni Edgar's Gab Chee Kee and Chito Miranda

WHERE'S DA AFTER-AFTER-PARTY? The Larsian dining experience

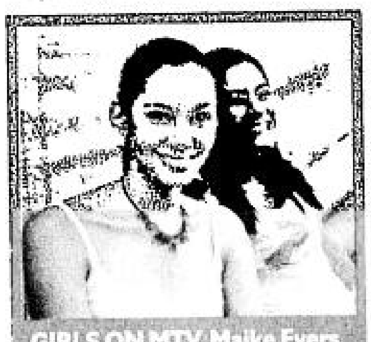
ROAD TRIP. The giant hand attacks the surprised rock stars.

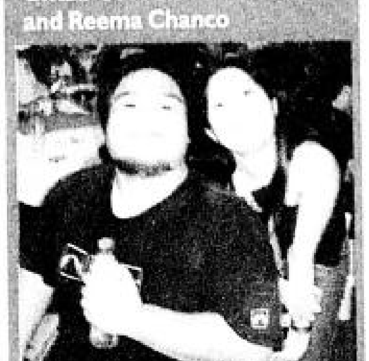
Cebupalooza!

I'M NOT STALKING YOU. Kitchie Nadal backstage

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz


GIRLS ON MTV. Maike Evers and Reema Chanco


RELAX *MUNA*. Kjwan's Jorel Corpus and MTV's Lizette Claudio

O-HA PART 2. Chito Miranda and me after a few mojitos

ALLOW me to grab both your arms and look you in the eye as I ask you this: Have you ever been so buzzed that you wanted to give the first person you saw one long, intense, awkward, closed-eyed, non-gay embrace? Well, have you?

Those who answered "Fo sho!" (read: "Yes!") but did so while hopped up on Ecstasy, Viagra or Jesus, please put your hands down, like, now. See, what I'm talking about is an all-natural high in its purest, vestal virgin form.

I know, I know—what's a vestal virgin? Or better yet, what's a virgin? I leave that for you to Google. (Or Gizoogle, if you want the results Snoop Dogg-ified.) But back to the matter at hand.

I hurled that simple question at you kids because I recently went to my first-ever Pinoy rock concert, MTV Hits Cebu. And as with all non-traumatic first-time extravaganzas, I want to know if I'm in good company as I bask in the afterglow and puff on a post-coital cigarette. So to speak.

Positive noise

My somewhat hyperactive Saturday began shortly after touching down in the Queen City of the South—a.k.a. "The Cebu." Together with the pitter-patter of thousands of feet, I made my way to the SM City Cebu parking lot and planted my ass by the tents backstage.

With the 4 p.m. sun beating down, however, I started to melt, rather miserably, like an ice cube in hell. But, aside from the undeniable heat, I sensed an upbeat vibe from the hometown crowd that started to gather in this throbbing open-air sauna. (High fives, everybody! Just make sure your deodorant works.)

MTV has been creating positive noise in Cebu since 2002. This year, though, was slightly different. "Last year we had Thai pop superstar Tata Young and this year we had Cebuano dub-reggae favorite Junior Kilat. That's just one of the differences between the two events," so goes Lizette Claudio, MTV communications and press executive.

After urging young people to vote during last year's election-themed showcase, MTV then encouraged the youth—particularly unsigned bands from Cebu—to give stardom a shot this time. From rap metal and blues to ska/reggae and jazz/rock, six bands made the final cut and participated in a pre-event amateur band competition.

Sounding eerily like No Doubt, Skunky Muggles opened the show with their version of fusion ska. Blues band Bai then stirred up images of FHM-friendly beer commercials with their cover version of Sino's "Problema na Naman" and "Sugar Mommy," an original composition.

The competition's subsequent winners, jazz-rock collective Zarah Smith, took center stage afterwards as did modern rock band Hastang, Britpop-influenced Mood, and experimental hip-hop posse Nyor.

On the one hand, the talent, though raw, was undeniable. Each band, no matter what genre, had an appealing, clear-cut sound. On the other hand, all of the six contenders needed a lot of help in the style department; the way they looked did not complement the way they sounded at all.

LOOK into my eyes, says KC Montero.

UUUUYM! [illegible] Reema Chanco

Top tip: As with any product or marketing initiative, everything—from the name of your band to the way you are packaged—has to be taken into consideration in order to come up with a focused, consistent (and therefore more potent) brand image. *O-ha*.

Rock star petting zoo

Looking up at the sky, I noticed it had turned an ominous shade of Dior gray at around 6 p.m. Thankfully, it didn't rain as the crew feared. Instead, a light breeze made the hellishly hot Saturday afternoon a bit more bearable.

Or not really, as it happened, since said breeze also spread the lovely aroma of a nearby Porta-potty, rounding out my dinner of thrice-heated roast duck *quesadillas* and lukewarm Pepsi. Yum. By this time as well, the main acts started to pour into the comforts of the VIP tent, turning it into a slightly boozy, tween-groupie-filled, rock star petting zoo.

According to MTV marketing manager Bebeth Timbol, a little over 30,000 people braved the heat and turned the SM City Cebu parking lot into a little piece of rock music heaven. With a totally badass lineup consisting of supergroups like Parokya ni Edgar and Kjwan to emerging heavyweights such as Sugarfree and Urbandub, the audience turnout was no shocker.

Stadium-ready choruses

Possibly wreaking more havoc than America's foreign policy, Junior Kilat first dirtied it up with "Ako si M16," "K-Fyne," and "Agta." Though I do not speak a word of Cebuano, the language in which the band proudly sings, the sea of humanity's jungle-like response was enough for me to grasp what Budoy and company were rapping about. (Yeah, for some reason, I suddenly remembered Timmy and the Lords of the Underworld from my all-time favorite "South Park" episode, "Timmy 2000." *Timmehh!*)

Again, this being my first time in a real-deal *rakrakan* setting, it was amazing to see such an appreciative and responsive mob, unlike Manila and American audiences who are generally more blasé, even jaded.

AYOS NA AYOS! MTV VJ John Joe Joseph and Parokya ni Edgar's Buwi Meneses

The lovefest continued as another homegrown act, Urbandub, tore through their five-song set. The festival atmosphere grew steadily with Marc Abaya and Kjwan ("Boomerang," "Twilight," and "Daliri") and the stadium-ready choruses of my new favorite act, Sugarfree ("Sinta," "Mariposa," and "Hari ng Sablay").

I had been told there was a slight—and mildly exciting, admit it—possibility that Kitchie Nadal wouldn't make it in time for the concert so, like programmed monkeys, everyone gave a collective sigh of relief when she did. Lending a different musical climate, Kitchie's "Huwag na Huwag Mong Sasabihin" was the obvious crowd favorite.

Even Parokya ni Edgar, who took the stage next, couldn't resist teasing the visibly sweaty crowd with a few seconds of that radio hit. Suffice it to say, Parokya's own party anthems "Buloy," "The Yes Yes Show," and "First Day Funk" crizunked everybody up some more.

To pass the time in between sets, some restless audience members began tossing beach balls and inflated Frenzy condoms in the urine-scented air. And by the time Rivermaya, the last band, went up, some dude in the audience had already mooned Cindy Kurleto. Twice.

I found it a bit strange that Rivermaya was the only band with an audio-visual intro, but I was soon told that this Cebu concert was the only opportunity MTV had to award Rico and the boys with their 2005 Asia Award for Best Artist. (Bear in mind that the annual show turned into the somber and unexciting MTV Asia Aid benefit sometime ago.) Okay, pseudo-diva-like behavior forgiven.

After-after-party

With my twentysomething liver on my side.

Two Pinoy films with enough guts . . .

From page E1

'La Visa Loca' looks nice, tastes nice, but doesn't quite settle

Mark Meily's middle name is still 'Crying Ladies'

By James Gabrillo and Pepe Diokno

THE FAIRY-TALE: Written and directed by clever and capable Mark Meily, "La Visa Loca" is about Jess (Robin Padilla), a limo driver who dreams of grabbing that US visa, but always goes home denied.

It's also about his relationships with his dad, Mang Sancho (Johnny Delgado); his prized client Nigel Adams (Paul Holme), host of Planet Strange, a show that documents all the world's oddities; his old girlfriend Mara (Rufa Mae Quinto), who works in a carnival freak show as a mermaid; and his eight-year-old son Jason.

Told in *Pasyon* form, the film captures us in a cyclone of how Pinoys can let go of everything for a better life, how we all make incredibly tough choices day after day, and how excitingly multihued our culture is.

James: With the original Pinoy bad boy's performance at its center, "La Visa Loca" is a decent comeback vehicle for Robin Padilla—it has a clear story, deft direction and superior visuals. It's also predictably basic but you can't have, like, everything.

The characters are extremely lovable but, and I hate to use this word, stereotypical. They're a little over marshmallow that they don't act like real people, they act like stereotypes. Fortunately, there's a lot of chemistry that saves the film.

Robin and Johnny Delgado hit it off well in their scenes together—there's the one where Robin takes his dad to a prayer meeting a la El Shaddai, and John-D desperately needed to do number 2. And there's the one where son catches dad canoodling the bejesus out of a Ms. Obando pageant winner who's, give or take, 17 years old.

Rufa Mae and the little kid are pleasant together, but they never really give a solid impression. The supporting cast, led by Paul Holme, Raymart Santiago and the *Pasyon* Chorus, are not totally fine as, say, Bo Bice winning American Idol, but they're not totally bad as, well, gangsta crap music.

Oh, one more thing—the tugs on the heartstrings are too insistent. The scenes where Robin listens to Johnny blab his feelings out on a late night radio talk show are cute, hilarious and reminiscent of how truly annoying Madam Ratsa is; but the one near the end of the film is too much.

Amid its pop-up book complexity, there are pleasures. One, it's a visual feast—the production design and cinematography are crafted well. Two, its takes on the quirky circus show called Pinoy culture ring true, not self-important and affected. Three, its Robin-and-Johnny-sitting-on-a-tree storyline is amusing and essential enough, almost making one wonder what that US visa is doing in there anyway. Four, though it lacks the spice of that other Meily movie, you won't hear more candidly gross dialogue on-screen any time soon. And five, when Rufa Mae develops colds and the little kid gets diabetes (I'm not kidding), and John-D gets rushed to the hospital because of a near heart attack, I think to myself, well time to prepare those David Pomeranz tapes 'cause they're all gonna die now.

But noooo. Meily is thin-skinned enough not to screw the audience up. Everyone lives to see the credits rolling. Yay for a happy ending!

"La Visa Loca" has some dramatic characters. A little give-away of a story. A cool script with unforeseen tiny twists here and there. A realization that *actually* comes from somewhere. And best of all... has no funeral scene. Girls and boys, it's the anti-Mano Po.

Pepe: Okay, I don't want to be the bad one here. But this is the truth—I thought the movie was as dragging as Star Wars Episode 1.

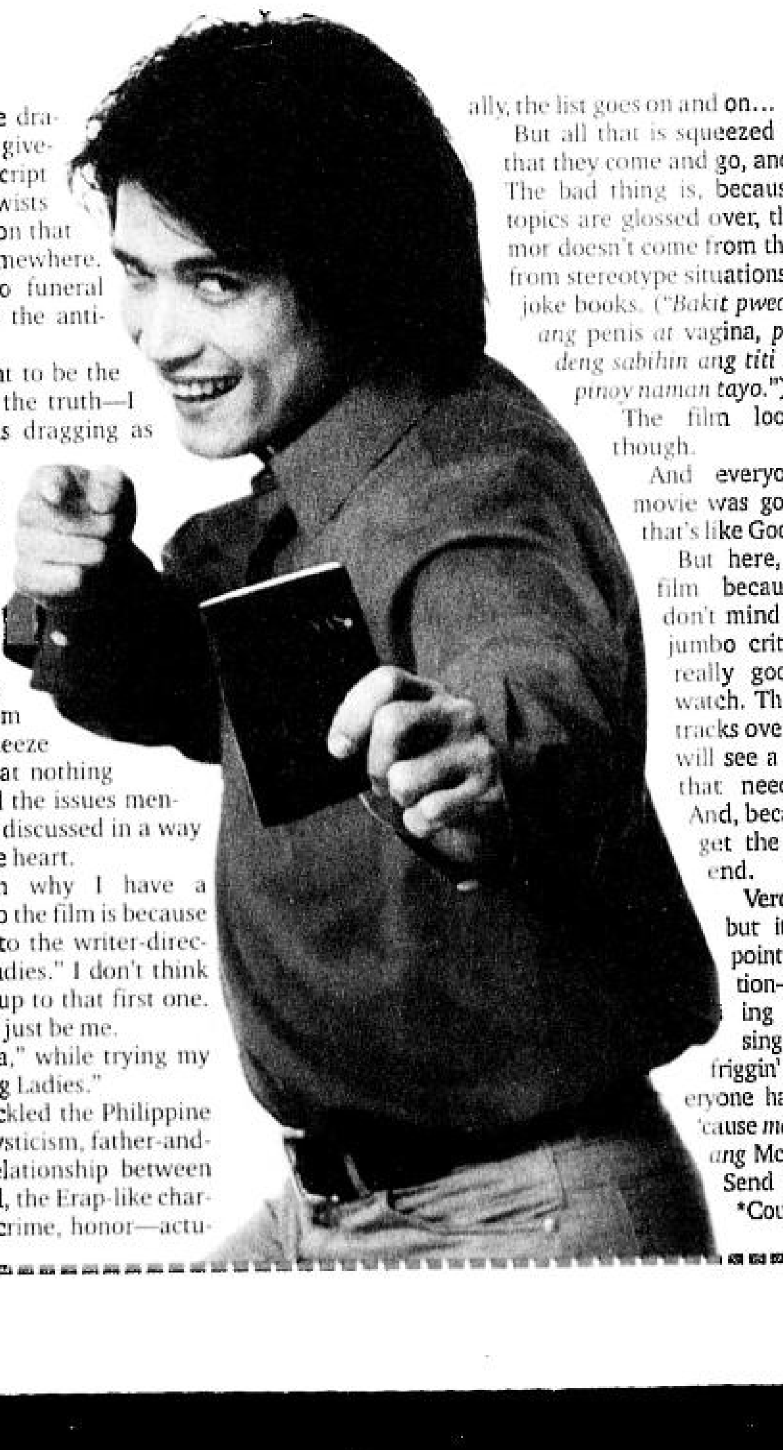
Here's the thing: If you go into the theater expecting a film about Jess, a limo driver who dreams of grabbing that US visa, but always goes home denied—this isn't it.

Which is probably a good thing. But the problem is, Mark Meily tries to squeeze so much into this film that nothing gets tackled well—and all the issues mentioned above aren't really discussed in a way that hits you straight in the heart.

But okay, the reason why I have a slight—slight—aversion to the film is because I might be comparing it to the writer-director's first film, "Crying Ladies." I don't think "La Visa Loca" measures up to that first one. But then again, that could just be me.

So, I'll look at "La Visa," while trying my best not to think of "Crying Ladies."

I liked that the film tackled the Philippine diaspora, nationalism, mysticism, father-and-son relationships, the relationship between Jess and Mara and her kid, the Erap-like character with the bold star, crime, honor—actually, the list goes on and on...



But all that is squeezed in so much that they come and go, and *wala lang*. The bad thing is, because all these topics are glossed over, the most humor doesn't come from the issues but from stereotype situations you find in joke books. (*"Bakit pwedeng sabihin ang* penis *at* vagina, *pero 'di pwedeng sabihin ang titi at puke? Eh pinoy naman tayo."*)

The film looked great, though.

And everyone in the movie was gooood. (Hey, that's like Google!)

But here, go see the film because, if you don't mind the mumbo jumbo criticism, it's a really good thing to watch. Though it fast-tracks over things, you will see a lot of issues that need attention. And, because he does get the visa in the end.

Verdict: Yummy, but it reaches its point of saturation—it's like having Mcdo every single day for 30 friggin' days. But everyone has to see it... 'cause *masarap naman ang* Mcdo. (*Cough* Send us free food! *Cough*)

O-HA! Excuse the randomness. It was 3:30 a.m.

RICO SUAVE. Rivermaya's Rico Blanco lights up the crowd

I snaked my way to the after-party at—surprise!—Café Havana in Ayala Center Cebu. Being neither a brown chick nor a white dude, I never kicked back at Café Havana so it was even more surreal—and, uhm, cathartic—for me to get down to a local rendition of Ricky Martin's "La Bomba" with drunken VJs and disorderly rock stars.

Drawing their evil power from free *mojitos*—or *agua de dahon* as Chito Miranda called them—several members of Parokya ni Edgar, Rivermaya and Kjwan even requested for The Miami Sound Machine's "Conga." Mind you, there was no DJ. Cebu has probably never had its personal space violated this way. Gotta love it.

Not satisfied with the Cuban pizza they served me (it had bananas and therefore tasted like ass), I joined an after-after-party so secret it almost didn't exist. Yup, feebly drunk, I hopped into a van with the aforementioned rock stars and made my way to a barbecue place called Larsian, deep in the ghettos of the city, to gorge on dubious grilled meat products. (With rats darting across the cement floor, it was clear that sanitation wasn't an issue here, which is why you should only hit Larsian when you're roaring drunk. And maybe, partially blind.)

Hangover- and diarrhea-free, I got up the next day to survey the Waterfront Hotel, our home that weekend, for any signs of rock-induced damage. With no visible puddles of vomit to dodge, I then shot the shit with a noticeably relieved Caloi Ferrer, MTV marketing executive.

"The challenge for the MTV team was to surpass last year's success. Thanks to the Cebuanos, we weren't disappointed," he said.

Really, I couldn't help but become inspired by my Cebupalooza experience. It's one thing to hear a band on the radio or see their videos on TV. It's another to actually see them thrill a crowd the way they did last Saturday.

With more young local talents providing the soundtrack to our generation, not a few insiders have observed that 2005 marks a rebirth of sorts for the Pinoy rock scene. I'd like to add that I can say the same thing about me as a music fan.

When MTV hit Cebu, 13 bands and over 30,000 sweaty people turned a parking lot into a little piece of rock music heaven. Ayos!

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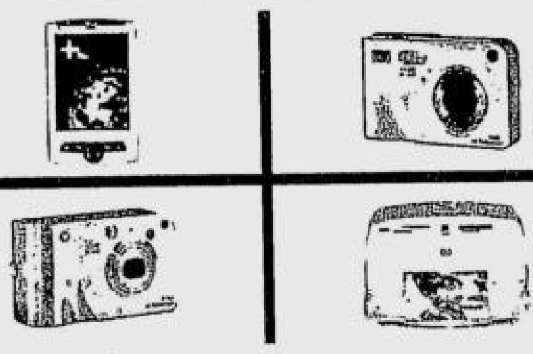

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Super! presents the Manila Fashion Festival 2005

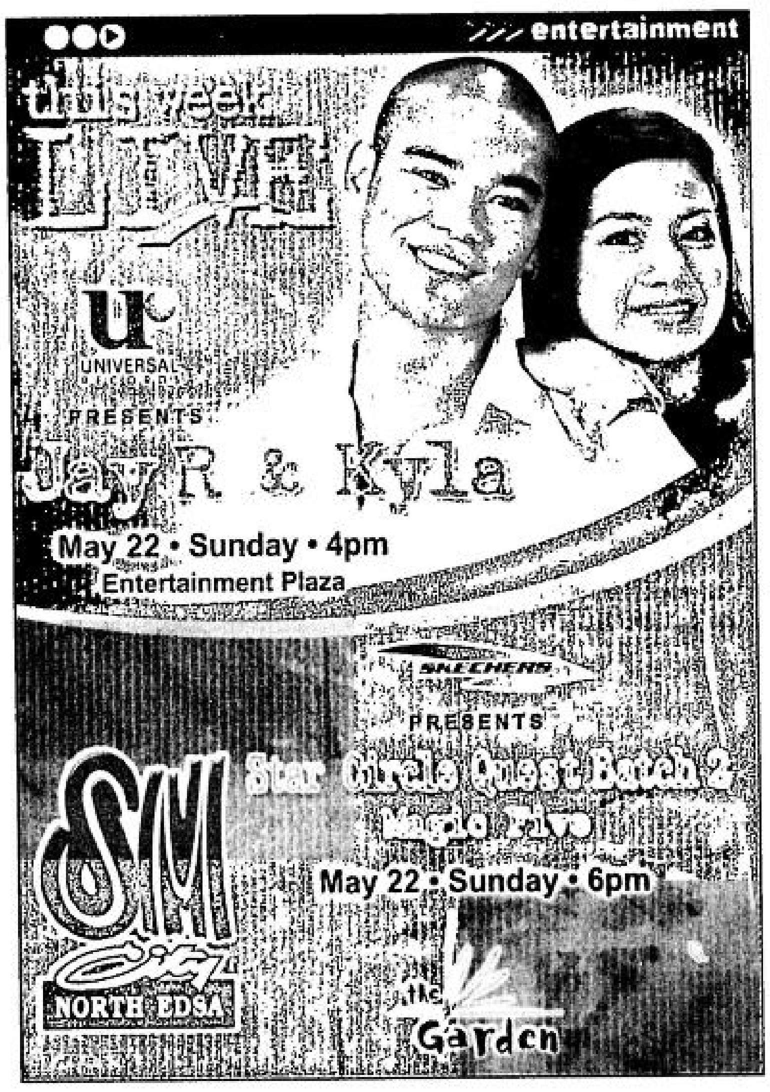
STYLING: MARLON RIVERA
MAKEUP: RICCI CHAN
PHOTO BY RICKY VILLABONA

If style is the dress of thought, then what could local fashion retailers possibly be thinking?

Text by Tals Diaz
Interviews by Tim Yap

SOME people have complained that local fashion seems to lag several seasons behind. Yet this observation stems from the perpetual habit of looking West and taking its cue from there. Over the years, however, there has been a steady, progressive growth in the Pinoy fashion industry. Several small brands have in fact withstood the economic crises to become powerhouses in their own right. With their own

IF STYLE/ F2



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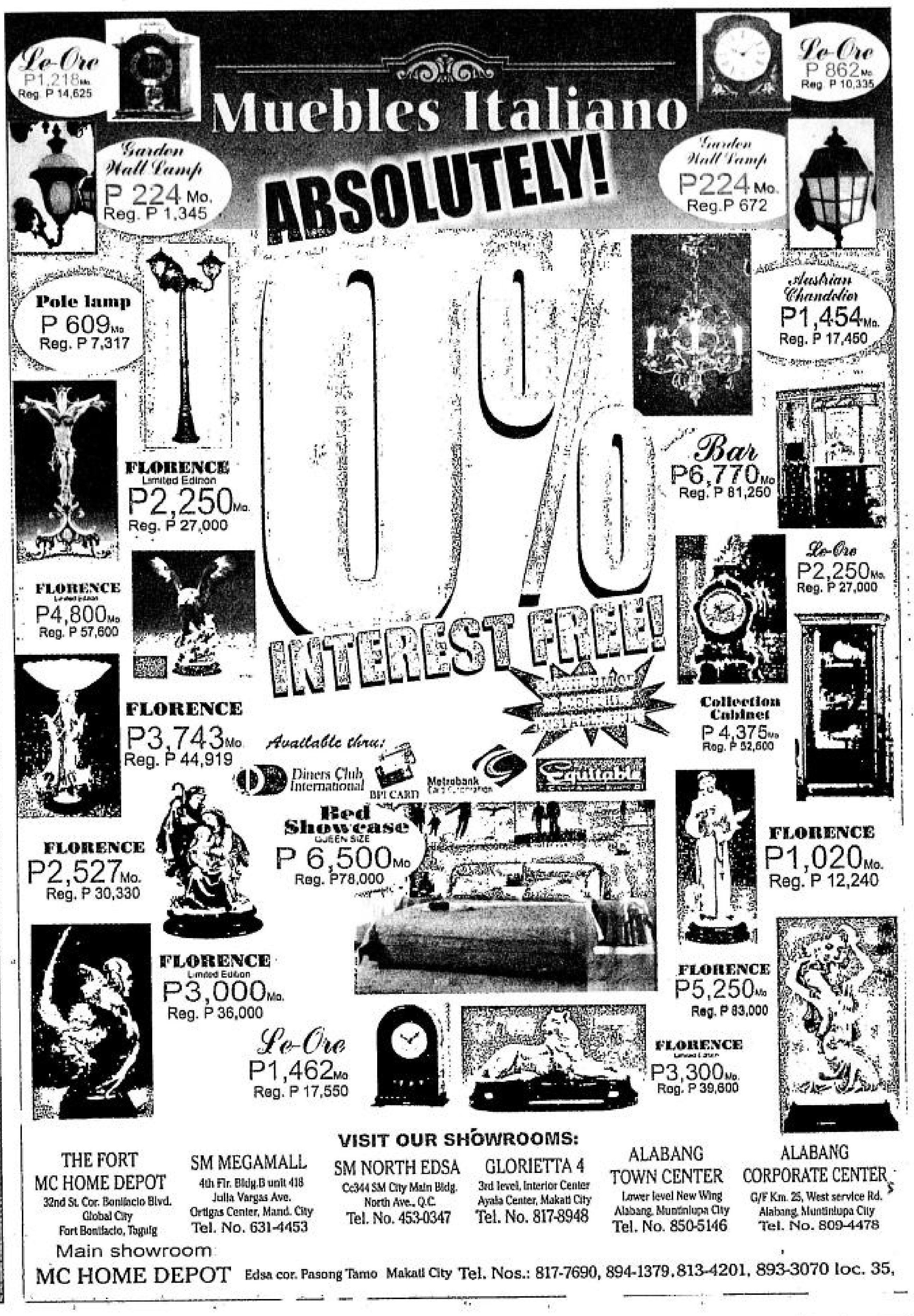

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FLORENCE P3,743 Mo. Reg. P 44,919
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SM NORTH EDSA Cc344 SM City Main Bldg. North Ave., Q.C. Tel. No. 453-0347
GLORIETTA 4 3rd level, Interior Center Ayala Center, Makati City Tel. No. 817-8948
ALABANG TOWN CENTER Lower level New Wing Alabang, Muntinlupa City Tel. No. 850-5146
ALABANG CORPORATE CENTER G/F Km. 25, West service Rd. Alabang, Muntinlupa City Tel. No. 809-4478
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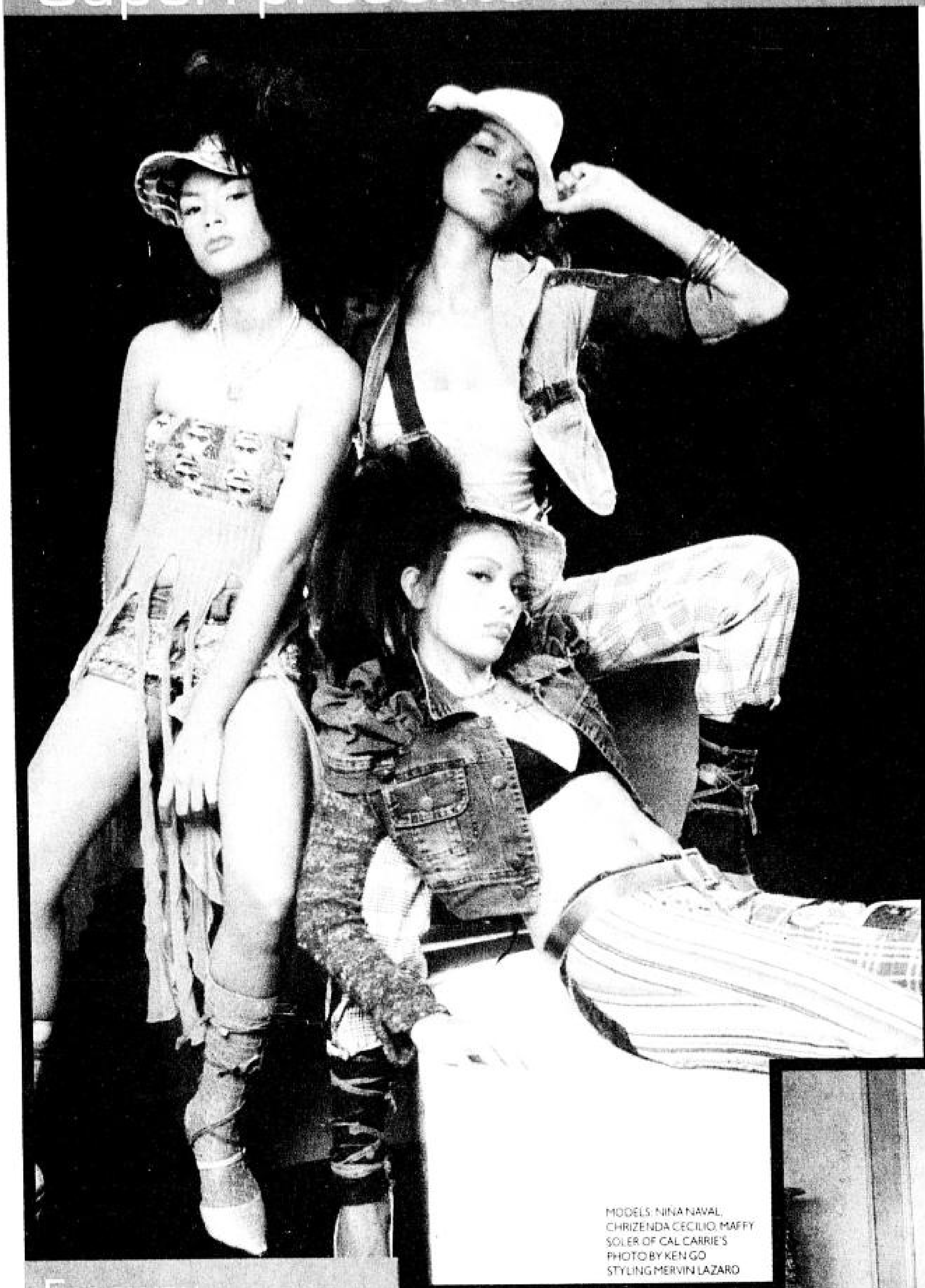

MODELS: NINA NAVAL, CHRIZENDA CECILIO, MAFFY SOLER OF CAL CARRIE'S
PHOTO BY KEN GO
STYLING MERVIN LAZARO

Freeway

The thing that makes our brand so Pinoy is adaptability to any given situation just like a true Pinoy! Our clothes are trendy, dynamic and quickly adapt to the times. Our style is not restricted by the time of day, occasion or season. Our clothes are versatile and exude individualism and self-expression.
Our must have-items this season are shrunken jackets, bermuda shorts, tiered skirts, boho inspired tops, bottoms & accessories, vintage/pop-art prints on everywhere!
The following peeps wear our stuff: Pia Guanio, Nina Corpuz, Nikki Gil, Cindy Kurleto
What sets us apart is our trendy, fast-changing style and the wide variety of colors and silhouettes we offer.
Ten years from now we will be 10 times better!
The best compliment someone ever gave us is Freeway jeans fit so well and the clothes are flattering and make us look sexy.
We want to give a makeover to Sarah Geronimo because we feel her clothing style must give justice to her incredible voice.

Folded and Hung

What makes our brand so Pinoy is our flair for the dramatic, the ingenuity and the fervor to achieve greater things
Our must-have item this season is a pair of illegally low jeans.
These peeps wear our stuff: models, celebs, artists, stylists, people who take fashion seriously.
What sets us apart is we always think out of the box, we always break out of the ordinary, the mundane.
Ten years from now we will be an international brand.
The best compliment we ever got—a customer once said, "Y
make me look good."
We want to give a makeover t
people trapped in the '80s (yo
know who you are), particular
those in pleated, high-waist pa
because...why not?

If style is the dre
local fashion ret

Rustan's Men

The thing that makes our brand so Pinoy is Salt and Black Label Homme fits the active lifestyle of the modern Pinoy. The fabrics are perfect for our weather. And of course, we're carried by the oldest and most respected luxury retailer in the Philippines— Rustan's.
Our must-have items for this season are Black Label's slim-fitting tops are perfect for dressier occasions while Salt's hand-painted linen tops are the best choice for urban getaways.
The following peeps wear our stuff: Epi Quizon and Boy Abunda are often seen sporting the latest Salt collections, while Joel Tantoco is a certified Black Label aficionado.
What sets us apart: Salt and Black Label maintain a distinctly European appeal that other labels can only aspire to, and we had the privilege of attending the European Men's fashion shows.
Ten years from now we will be major players in the international fashion scene. Black Label and Salt will be globally recogniz
The best compliment someone
That Black Label and Salt are
finest European labels.
We want to give a makeover to
Clooney—Killer looks, killer
look even more dapper and
trademark slim-cut shirts. Ou
give sophistication to the we
ing too stiff.

LALA GOTAO RUSTAN'S PERSONAL SHOOPER, HINDY WEBER-TANTOCO CULTE FEMME DESIGNER, MARIKO JACINTO, ARTIST, RUSTAN'S VIP SERVICES MANAGER RUSTAN'S LADIES FASHION BUYER PHOTOGRAPHER: VICTOR CONSUNJI MAKEUP: PEN LOGAN OF LAURA MERCIER AT RUSTAN'S ESSENSES

Culte Femme

What make our brand so Pinoy are color, embellishment, whimsy! Pinoy style is not about monotony or minimalism. (Also, our fit and style are adapted to the Filipina.)
Our must-have item this season is floor-length dresses, kaftans, cropped jackets, sailor pants.
The following peeps wear our stuff: I don't like to name names but, trust me, they're all fabulous!
What sets us apart is our style. At the moment, there isn't a single brand with a similar look or concept.
Ten years from now we will be as hard-core femme as ever. We hope to penetrate the foreign market, have a catalog, online shop, collaborations with other brands, designers, artists, etc.
The best compliment someone ever gave us was thinking Culte Femme was imported. And when women buy our stuff, we feel totally ecstatic.
We want to give a makeover to any girl who is bored, afraid or intimidated by fashion because fashion is meant to be enjoyed, to be used to its fullest potential for the benefit of our beauty and self-esteem. Fashion is one of our best weapons against all that is blah!

Cinderella

What makes our "store" so Pinoy is Cinderella started the Pinoy fashion revolution!
Our must-have item this season is pure and unadulterated wit!
The following peeps wear our stuff: Supahstars!
What sets us apart is attitude.
Ten years from now Dakota Fanning will be wearing Seventeen!
The best compliment we get from our clients is "That's sooo meeee!"
We want to give a makeover to no one because enhancing one's personality is the key.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

STYLING MARLON RIVERA
MAKEUP RICCI CHAN
PHOTO BY RICKY VILLABONA

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y
nts

PHOTO BY VICTOR CONSUNJI

Plains & Prints

What makes our brand so Pinoy is that Filipino hands make our clothes, no one else.
Our must-have item this season is our metallic and gold collection.
The following peeps wear our stuff: women of various lifestyles whose common denominator is that they know who they are and what they want. Women who are confident, independent, and know they can handle any challenge.
What set us apart are our fabric and workmanship.
Ten years from now every person will own a Plains & Prints.
The best compliment someone ever gave us was: "Congratulations for coming up with products that are really excellent in quality! I really love the fit, the texture, and the color is perfect! Keep up the good work!"
We want to give a makeover to any woman who feels that she isn't beautiful, because she can be.

ess of thought, then what could ailers possibly be thinking?

From page F1

unique vision, certain names have stood out in the attempt to define what Filipino style is truly about. Their inspirations are varied, and at times contradictory—how can they be revolutionizing Pinoy style when the ultimate compliment is to "look imported"? Shouldn't Filipino style be able to stand on its own instead of pitting itself against foreign archetypes? Given that, are they really blazing the trail or merely rehashing a proven formula?

Signing in Super!'s guest book this week are some of the major players that will be highlighted in the upcoming Manila Fashion Festival, attempting to define what it means to be a Filipino fashion force today.

Super! presents the Manila Fashion Festival 2005 this coming May 25, 7 p.m. at the NBC Tent. Watch out for a Super! surprise.

After-party follows at Embassy Super Club in celebration of our upcoming second year anniversary.

Stay Super!

THE TEAM BEHIND RUSTAN'S MEN'S DIVISION: FERDIE SALVADOR, MARK PEÑALOSA, GREGORY RODRIGUEZ MABLE, JOEL V. TANTOCO (RUSTAN'S VP FOR MARKETING AND AVP FOR MEN'S DIVISION), AMADOR MADAMBA AND CHRISTIAN RUBIO.

LYN AGUSTIN AND CORCOR BITONG, OWNERS OF BAYO

Bayo

The thing that makes our brand so Pinoy is the name itself. "*Bayo*" is an Ilonggo word meaning dress. For this alone, it makes the brand very Pinoy. The people behind the brand from the employees to majority of our suppliers are very Filipino.
Our must have item this season are skirts and gauchos.
The following people wear our stuff: Students, young professionals, actresses, singers, newscasters, housewives, entrepreneurs, the young and young at heart. In other words, all types of women wear Bayo.
What sets us apart is that our brand has a different set of values apart from all other brands. We are a brand who continuously strives to be the best we can in all aspects. We try to bring our brand to world class level to bring to the world's attention to what we Filipinos are capable of doing in the world of business and fashion.
10 years from now, we will still be Bayo... one of the leading brands in the local industry and has successfully penetrated our neighboring countries' fashion industry. A stronger Bayo...one of the leaders in the industry in all retailing aspects which would be by then also be 10 years more advanced.
The best compliment someone ever gave us was seeing our merchandise and store designs being used as an inspiration by other retailers is by far the best compliment we've received.
We want to give a makeover to: No one. At Bayo anybody is free to be who she is and what she is. Bayo is for everybody.

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hion pieces
without look-

PHOTO BY JESS SAEZ

Novecento

The thing that makes our brand so Pinoy is the fact that everything is 100% Filipino made.
Our must have item this season is a "casualized" formal shirt... It's basically a formal shirt made wearable for casual occasions
The following peeps wear our stuff: Zoren Legaspi, James Blanco, and Ricky Lo.
What sets us apart is our passion to put Manila in the world fashion scene.
10 years from now we will be a trendsetting global brand.
The best compliment someone ever gave us was... "Is this imported?"
We want to give a makeover to your "houseboy" because status is not a requirement for looking good

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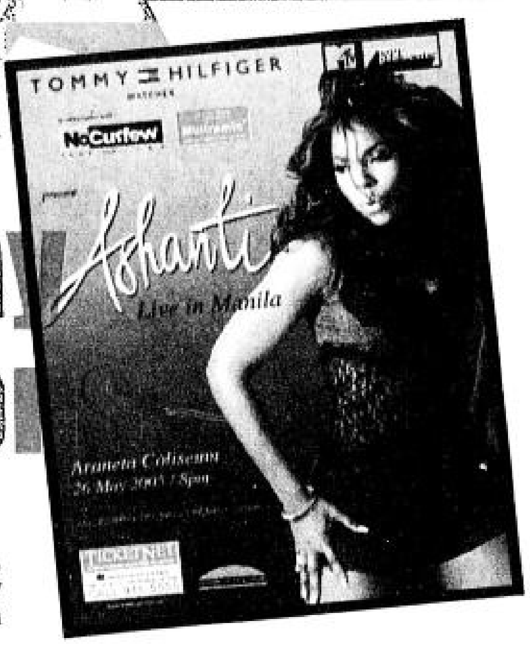
Dog day diversio



By Paolo R. Reyes and Janine Cuenca-Dario

AS TEMPERATURES hit the upper 30s, the air-conditioned places in the city have become welcome refuges from the stifling heat of the outdoors.

The season has made many people reluctant to make that wearying trudge to their favorite weekend haunts. We know it's easy to succumb to the languor of late afternoons, but here are some night-time destinations to beat the heat this week.

Lounge: sizzling, sexy, summerscape

Lounge, Paseo Uno's monthly poolside party, has now moved indoors (at least till the hot spell subsides).

Resident DJ Elian Habayeb celebrates his natal day tonight with another sizzling summer affair. Guest DJs spin alongside live percussionists. Call the Mandarin Oriental at 7508888.

Sweet indulgences part deux!

Chocoholics can finally quell the faint rumblings of their famished stomachs: the Chocolate Nights Weekend Buffet at The Peninsula Manila is back! Sweet treats await at the Lobby every Friday and Saturday from 8:30 p.m. to 12 midnight. Call 8872888.

I don't like Mondays!

Monday does not not have to be the dreariest day of the week. On May 23, head over to Gweilos Makati [109 Carlos Palanca St., Legazpi Village, Makati, tel: 8179083] and witness DJ Ro dish out everything from new wave punk to progressive rock. The party starts at 9 p.m.

FLiM: Fresh Live Music

On Tuesday, May 24, bohemian haven and popular live music venue, Saguijo [7612 Guijo St., San Antonio Village, Makati, tel. 8978629], will showcase the eclectic rhythms and beats of Sound, Whatevurittakes, Makopa, Tagguindios, Liquid Jane, and Salindiwa.

Unitel Pictures' La Visa Loca

The searing heat has been luring city folk to cineplexes. Wednesday, May 25, is the opening day of Unitel Pictures' latest flick, La Visa Loca, in theaters nationwide. It is a witty comedy and contemporary satire about the many lengths Filipinos go through to acquire a US visa. Visit www.lavisaloca.com.

Ashanti: Live in Manila!

On the heels of hip-hop giant Ja Rule comes the sultry R&B siren, Ashanti, for a one-night concert 8 p.m., Thursday, May 26, at the Araneta Coliseum, Cubao, Quezon City. Tickets are priced at P2,800, P2,500, P1,500, and P800. Call Ticketnet at 9115555.

Makati Festival: acoustic music and art

On Friday, May 27, catch the second installment of Makati City's answer to Woodstock. Paolo Santos, Noel Cabangon, Nyoy Volante, MYMP, and Acoustic Perfection perform in this free acoustic concert, 7 p.m., Plaza Strip, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center. Call 8906888. In nearby Nicanor Garcia Street, (formerly Reposo), Bel Air 2 Village, Grupo Reposo will launch a three-day festival entitled "Tibok Sining sa Reposo" with mural painting, art exhibits and concerts as part of the Araw ng Makati activities.

More Super! 24/7 events this week:

May 21, Saturday

General Eclectic, with BBC DJs, at Capone's; Dance Deluxe at Embassy; Dancehall Saturday at V Bar; House & RnB at Temple; DJ Kevin Ruiz at Government; Miss Universe Party at Bed, Dezi Nights with DJ Lavz at Bollywood

May 22, Sunday

Reggae Mistress at Café Havana Greenbelt, Paseo Uno Jazz Trio at Paseo Uno

May 23, Monday

Sitar Nights at Bollywood, Route 70 at Dusit Hotel, Follies de Mwah at Club Mwah!

May 24, Tuesday

Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt, Spirit of 67 at Captain's Bar

May 25, Wednesday

C Majors concert at CCP, Superklasse at Embassy, Singles Night at Temple, Sing India Band at Bollywood, Way Back Wednesdays at Bed

May 26, Thursday

Once on this Island at Carlos Romulo Theater, Mars Miranda & Steven Love at Government, Nyoy and Mannos at Suburbia

May 27, Friday

Nina at Music Museum, Musik at Embassy, Soul Fridays with Steve Mills at V Bar, Passage & K24/7 at Dusit Hotel.

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more information and a complete listing of events, text 24/7 through your mobile phone and send to 2949 for Globe and 209 for Smart. Submit schedules before Wednesday to e-mail addresses events@mag24-7.com and mag24_7@yahoo.com or fax 8920689.

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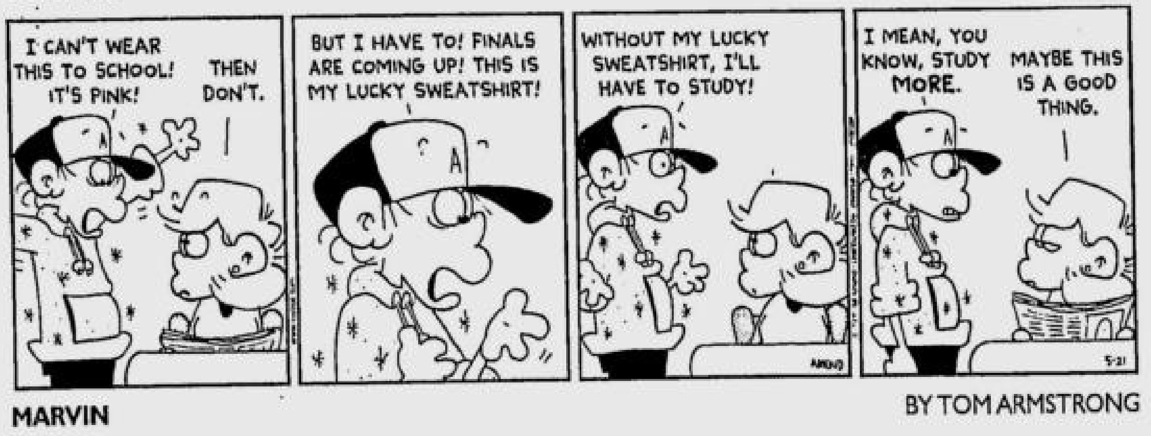
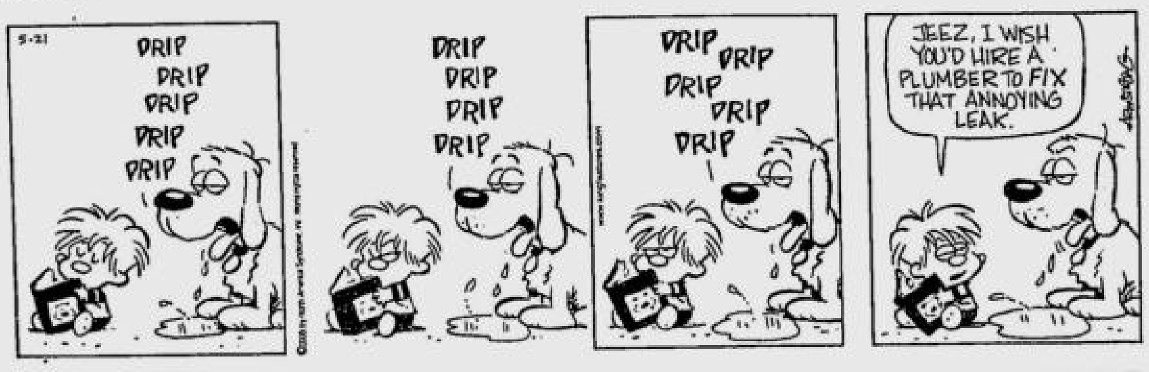
BY BILL AMEND


I CAN'T WEAR THIS TO SCHOOL! IT'S PINK!
THEN DON'T.
BUT I HAVE TO! FINALS ARE COMING UP! THIS IS MY LUCKY SWEATSHIRT!
WITHOUT MY LUCKY SWEATSHIRT, I'LL HAVE TO STUDY!
I MEAN, YOU KNOW, STUDY MORE.
MAYBE THIS IS A GOOD THING.
5-21

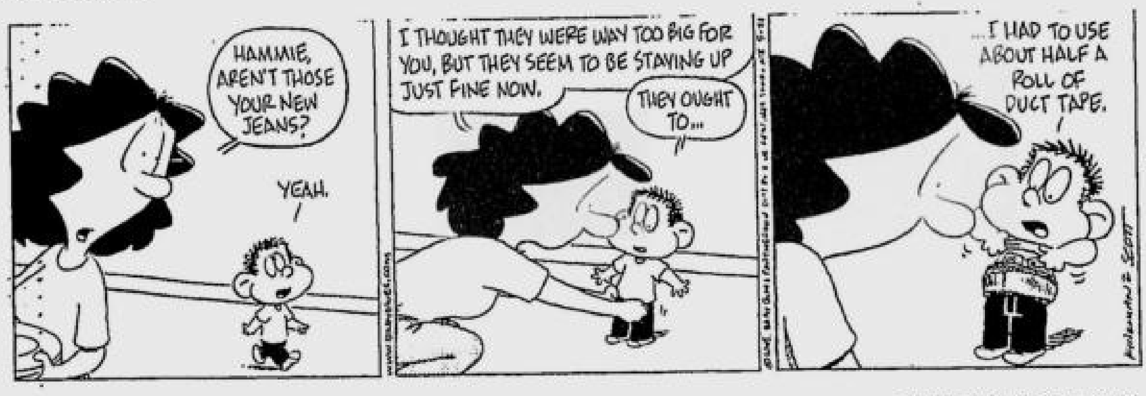
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


5-21
DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP
DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP
DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP DRIP
JEEZ, I WISH YOU'D HIRE A PLUMBER TO FIX THAT ANNOYING LEAK.

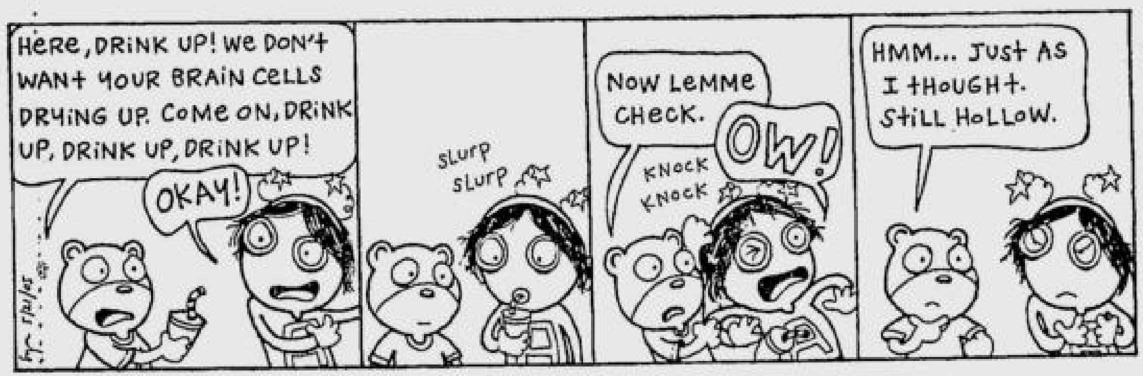
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE, AREN'T THOSE YOUR NEW JEANS?
YEAH.
I THOUGHT THEY WERE WAY TOO BIG FOR YOU, BUT THEY SEEM TO BE STAYING UP JUST FINE NOW.
THEY OUGHT TO...
...I HAD TO USE ABOUT HALF A ROLL OF DUCT TAPE.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Here, DRINK UP! We DON'T WANT YOUR BRAIN CELLS DRYING UP. COME ON, DRINK UP, DRINK UP, DRINK UP!
OKAY!
SLURP SLURP
NOW LEMME CHECK.
KNOCK KNOCK
OW!
HMM... JUST AS I THOUGHT. STILL HOLLOW.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're courageous. You stand up for your beliefs. Once you grapple with something, you're there for the duration. You're interested in social change. Sometimes your success comes to you later in life, after years of struggle. Fortunately, the year ahead could be one of the best years of your life! All doors are now open to you. Birthdate of: Judge Reinhold, actor; Raymond Burr, actor; Peggy Cass, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be extra-cautious about financial matters today and tomorrow. For some reason, you don't have a clear picture. (Someone might be withholding some important information from you.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Don't be discouraged if bosses or parents drive you crazy right now. (Easy to say, tough to do.) Do not take what others say at face value. Something fishy is going on.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Hidden secrets and possible deception in your dealings with others (could be on your side, could be on their side) are lurking everywhere. Don't make important decisions today and tomorrow.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be extra-careful about sharing with others. You might not have the full picture. You might also fall for a sob story that is not true.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Be careful that you don't believe what you want to believe when dealing with a partner or close friend. Try to see the facts for what they really are. (It's not always easy.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your idealism about your own pet cause might blind you to the real truth of something. It's easy for anyone to get taken in if he or she is too trusting. Try to be more objective.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Confusion about shared property, debt and taxes is likely now. You can't see the whole picture or, possibly, someone is withholding information from you—or even deceiving you. (Yikes!)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today and tomorrow are very poor times for important discussions with partners and friends. It's as if you have Vaseline on your lens; you can't see things clearly.

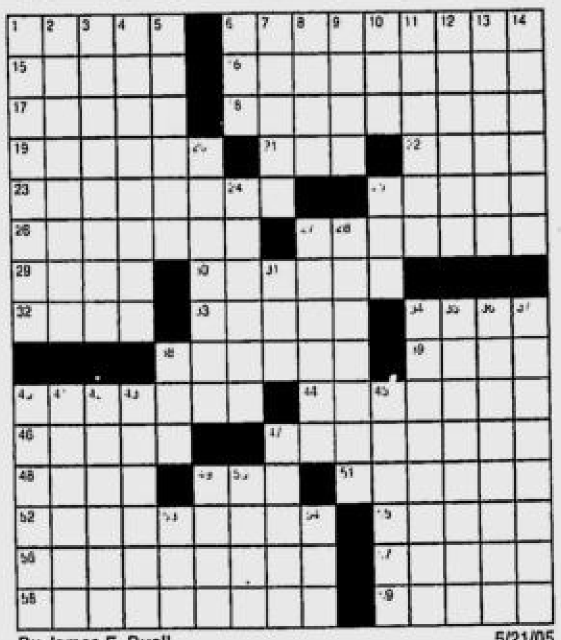
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Double-check everything at work. Somebody is not giving you the straight goods. There's something sneaky going on.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your creative abilities are strong now because your imagination is in overdrive. Parents must be tender and comforting with children now. (They need your help and understanding.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's good to help family; on the other hand, there is such a thing as idiot compassion. Make sure you know what you're doing. Don't let anyone take advantage of your kind heart.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): For some reason, many things are confusing right now. Avoid important decisions today and tomorrow because of this. (You don't have all the facts.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL.

5/21/05

ACROSS
1 Formidable stingers
6 Vexing problems
15 Trembling tree
16 Tsk-tsk!
17 Grenoble's department
18 Ponder
19 Soap box?
21 Nincompoop
22 "The Bone People" author Hulme
23 Independent presidential candidate of 1980
25 Stalin's predecessor
26 Intermixes
27 Last Supper guest
29 Summers on the Seine
30 Passenger restraint device
32 Apple center
33 Hang glides, e.g.
34 Hair division
38 Milk choice
39 Suggestive expression
40 Exculpates
44 Split up
46 Declares
47 Former Washington nine
48 Fulfill fully
49 Litigators' org.
51 At the ready
52 Male horses
55 Essential
56 Beginnings
57 Related maternally
58 Tough time for farmers
59 Ecological cycles

DOWN
1 Hold up!
2 OK
3 Most zippy
4 Wrongly self-willed
5 Curls one's lip
6 Broadway success
7 One of the Coen brothers
8 Closeout caveat
9 Duryea and Rather
10 Pop the question
11 Cracks under pressure
12 __ you heard?
13 Chef Lagasse
14 Nonessential amino acid
20 Football's Boomer
24 Gibson garnishes
25 Record of a voyage
27 Scrape
28 Macaroni for tots
31 Brit. flyboys
34 Story essential
35 Former Ford minivan
36 Duplicate
37 Structural supports
38 Figs.
40 Skipped a turn
41 Hindu incarnation
42 Traffic circle
43 Resides
45 Cylinder head parts
47 Toshiba rival
49 Verdi heroine
50 Feathery scarves
53 Sodium hydroxide
54 W-2 info

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	N	A	C	■	L	A	M	P	■	M	E	R	G	E
A	O	N	E	■	I	C	E	R	■	E	L	A	N	D
M	A	N	N	■	T	R	I	O	■	T	I	T	U	S
S	H	E	E	P	H	E	R	D	E	R	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	T	I	E	S	■	■	M	I	A	S	M	A
S	T	A	I	N	S	■	C	H	I	C	■	T	A	R
C	O	W	C	A	T	C	H	E	R	S	■	A	N	N
A	B	E	S	■	■	O	E	R	■	■	A	G	U	E
R	O	I	■	H	O	R	S	E	R	I	D	E	R	S
C	O	G	■	A	P	E	S	■	E	T	U	D	E	S
E	T	H	A	N	E	■	■	■	N	A	C	L	■	■
■	■	■	B	U	L	L	F	I	G	H	T	E	R	S
S	L	E	E	K	■	F	I	N	E	■	E	D	I	T
A	O	R	T	A	■	A	R	A	N	■	R	I	L	E
G	N	A	S	H	■	F	E	S	T	■	Y	E	L	P

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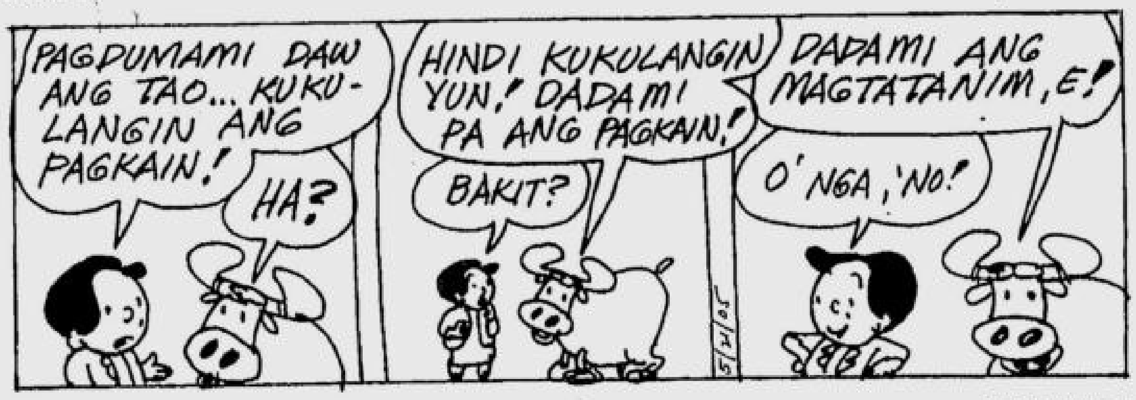
5/21/05

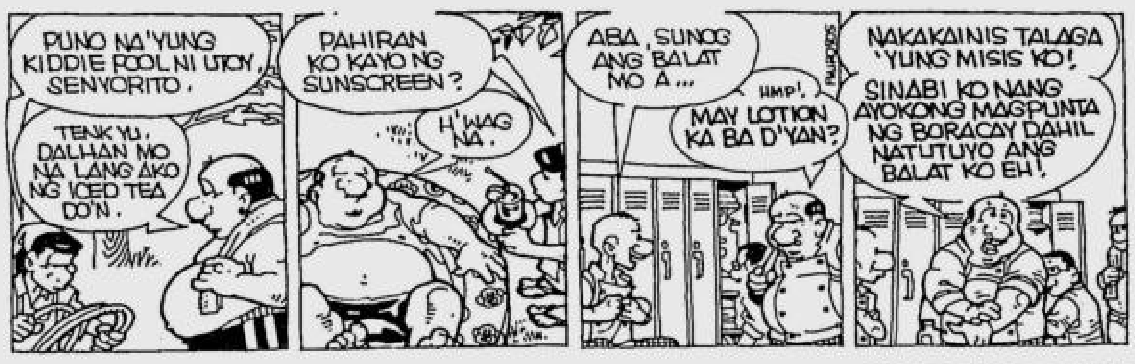
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PAGDUMAMI DAW ANG TAO... KUKULANGIN ANG PAGKAIN!
HA?
HINDI KUKULANGIN YUN! DADAMI PA ANG PAGKAIN!
BAKIT?
DADAMI ANG MAGTATANIM, E!
O' NGA, 'NO!
5/21/05

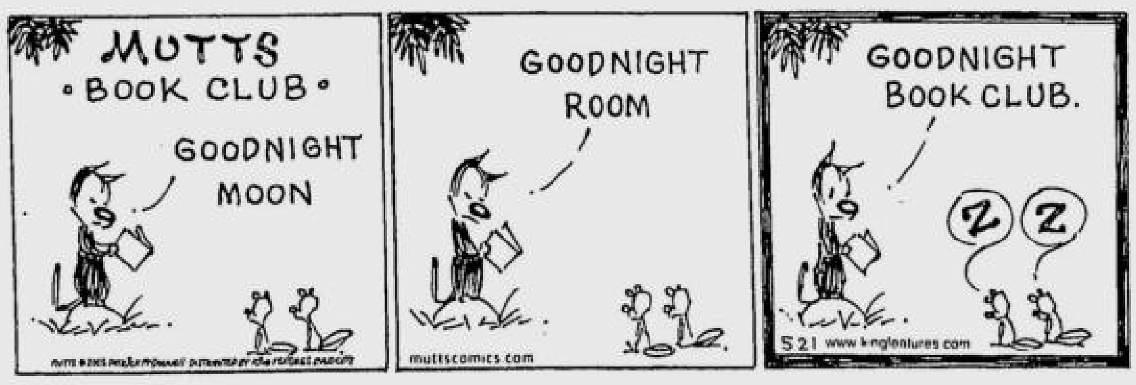
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PUNO NA'YUNG KIDDIE POOL NI UTOY, SENYORITO.
TENK YU. DALHAN MO NA LANG AKO NG ICED TEA DO'N.
PAHIRAN KO KAYO NG SUNSCREEN?
H'WAG NA.
ABA, SUNOG ANG BALAT MO A...
HMP! MAY LOTION KA BA D'YAN?
NAKAKAINIS TALAGA 'YUNG MISIS KO!
SINABI KO NANG AYOKONG MAGPUNTA NG BORACAY DAHIL NATUTUYO ANG BALAT KO EH!

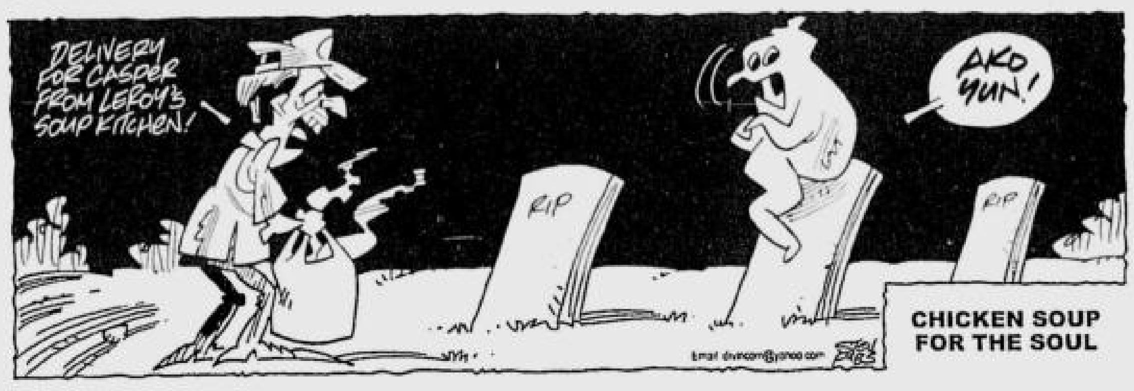
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MUTTS •BOOK CLUB•
GOODNIGHT MOON
GOODNIGHT ROOM
GOODNIGHT BOOK CLUB.
Z Z
mutts comics.com
5.21 www.kingfeatures.com

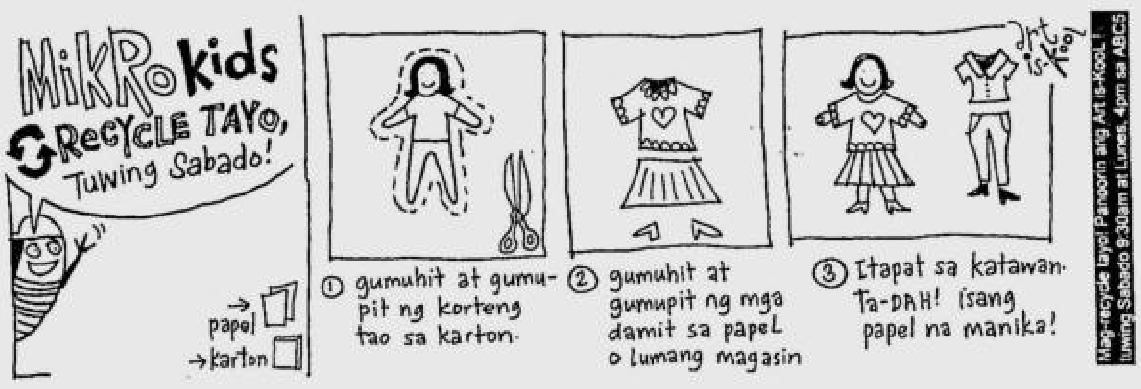
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DELIVERY FOR CASPER FROM LEROY'S SOUP KITCHEN!
AKO YUN!
RIP
RIP
CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL
Email divincom@yahoo.com

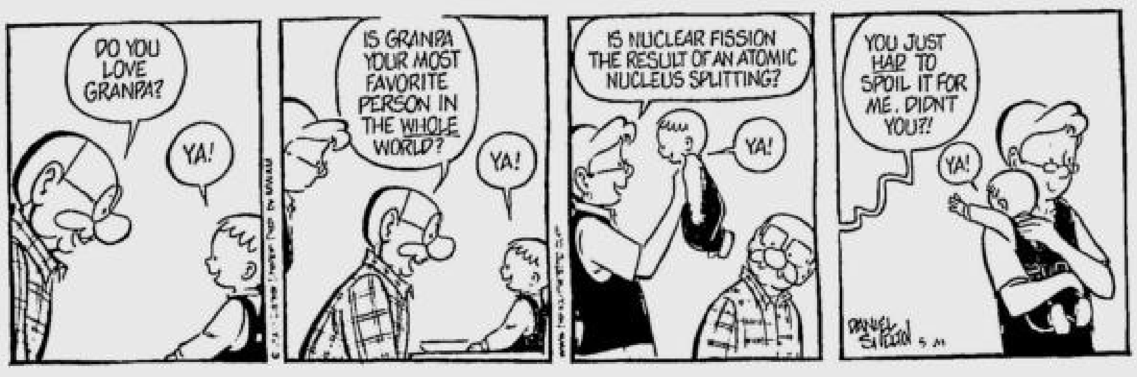
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo Kids
RECYCLE TAYO, Tuwing Sabado!
papel
karton
① gumuhit at gumupit ng korteng tao sa karton.
② gumuhit at gumupit ng mga damit sa papel o lumang magasin
③ Itapat sa katawan. Ta-DAH! Isang papel na manika!
Art is-Kool
Mag-recycle tayo! Panoorin ang Art is-Kool, tuwing Sabado 9:30am at Lunes, 4pm sa ABC5

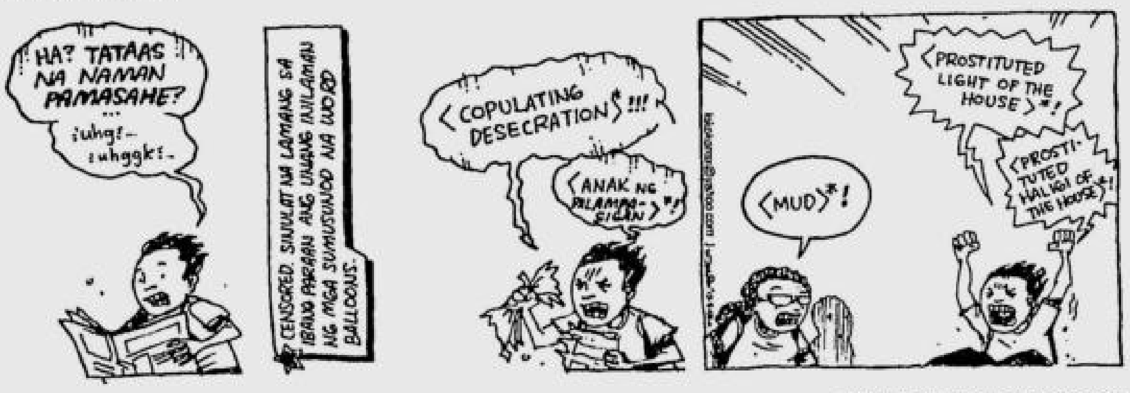
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DO YOU LOVE GRANPA?
YA!
IS GRANPA YOUR MOST FAVORITE PERSON IN THE WHOLE WORLD?
YA!
IS NUCLEAR FISSION THE RESULT OF AN ATOMIC NUCLEUS SPLITTING?
YA!
YOU JUST HAD TO SPOIL IT FOR ME. DIDN'T YOU?!
YA!
DANIEL SHELTON 5.21

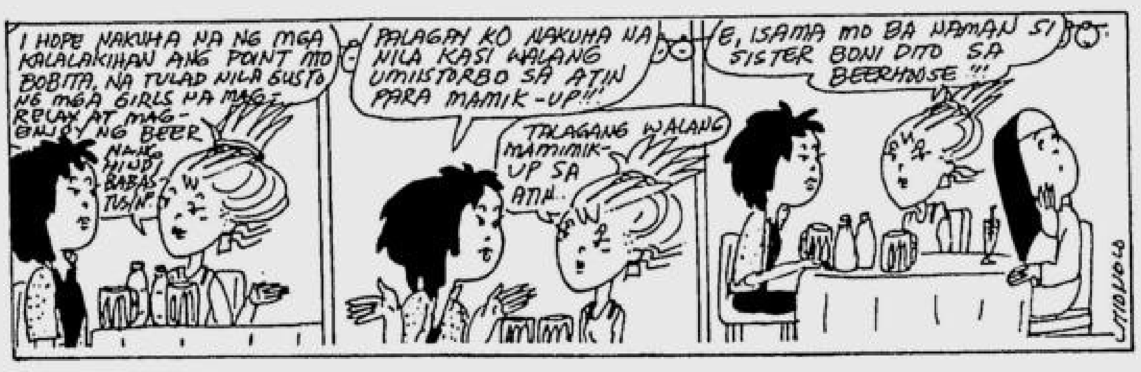
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HA? TATAAS NA NAMAN PAMASAHE?
¡uhg!- ¡uhggk!-
CENSORED: SINULAT NA LAMANG SA IBANG PARAAN ANG UMANG INILALAMAN NG MGA SUMUSUNOD NA WORD BALLOONS.
⟨COPULATING DESECRATION⟩!!!
⟨ANAK NG PALAMBA-SILAN⟩*!
⟨MUD⟩*!
⟨PROSTITUTED LIGHT OF THE HOUSE⟩*!
⟨PROSTITUTED HALIGI OF THE HOUSE⟩*!

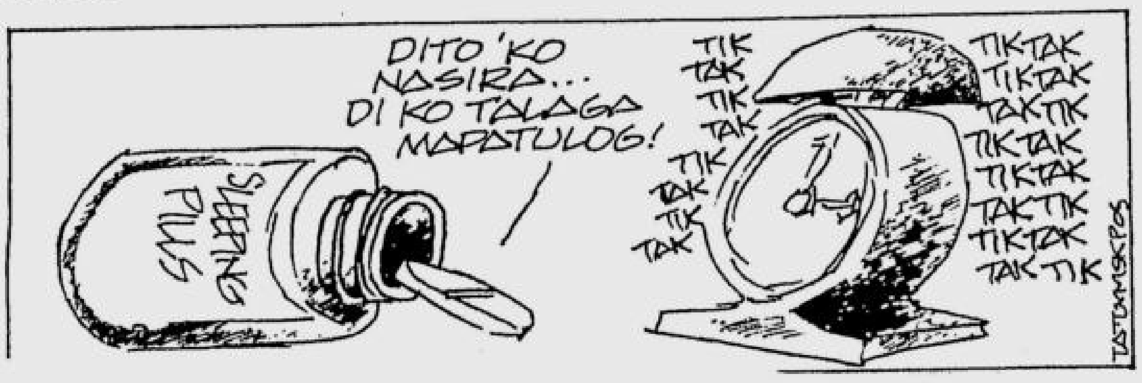
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


I HOPE NAKUHA NA NG MGA KALALAKIHAN ANG POINT MO BOBITA, NA TULAD NILA GUSTO NG MGA GIRLS NA MAG-RELAX AT MAG-ENJOY NG BEER
NAKS, HINDI BABAS-TUSIN!
PALAGAY KO NAKUHA NA NILA KASI WALANG UMIISTORBO SA ATIN PARA MAMIK-UP!!
TALAGANG WALANG MAMIMIK-UP SA ATIN...
E, ISAMA MO BA NAMAN SI SISTER BONI DITO SA BEERHOUSE !!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DITO 'KO NASIRA... DI KO TALAGA MAPATULOG!
SLEEPING PILLS
TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK
TIKTAK TIKTAK TAKTIK TIKTAK TIKTAK TAKTIK TIKTAK TAKTIK
TATUM MSKPOS

MAKING A BUZZ. Phoem Barranda in Rhett Eala

FASHION FOR MILES. Aubrey Miles is a red carpet standout

PANDAY POWER. Echo Rosales with Jenny Hernandez

GEISHA GUY. Dennis Trillo, best actor awardee

DANDY DUET. Kyla and Jay R

Luna-chic night with the stars

By Tim Yap

IT IS no joke to wear long gowns and sport 50's looks in the sweltering heat of Manila's sun, so salute the celebrities who braved the humidity and made their way to the Westin Philippine Plaza to wave to the cameras that rolled for the Luna Awards, the fellow-artist tribute formerly known as the Film Academy of the Philippines Awards.

I missed Gretchen's bling and Tessa's flash, but this year had its fair share of fashion moments. Celia Rodriguez took frou frou to another level, this time in a Tang orange show stopper. Nobody else would have been able to carry it off.

The date-less Aubrey Miles looked like an Asian Barbie doll while Phoem Barranda, the night's best dressed woman in our book, sizzled in a Rhett Eala couture confection. For that, she also took home a Louis Vuitton cherry bag as "Goddess of the Night" from Vicki Belo in this night of Smart Infinity festivities.

Regine Velasquez outshone even the red carpet in her crimson Rajo Laurel renaissance gown. Angel Locsin arrived in a midnight blue Bob Mackie-inspired gown while Francine Prieto chose virginal baby pink for her entrance.

Cherie Gil won as Mega Fashion Icon in an emerald green Cesar Gaupo. Oh well, she can wear a garbage bag and still look impeccable.

I felt oh so 50's in my Rajo Laurel but it was Piolo Pascual who won best dressed. My bet went to Jericho Rosales, who looked the most dapper in a tux. I had to shake his hand for being our generation's Panday—now that's a classic.

Bloated egos, diva airs

The stars felt like a million bucks as BMWs dropped them off at the end of the red carpet at the Harbor Garden while a feast was prepared for them by Westin chefs at the ballroom. Things started a bit late, but who's on time in Manila? Moet et Chandon was overflowing, so I was seeing more stars as the program continued.

"The Luna is giving back our dignity," I heard a celebrity declare at the red carpet preshow, which I co-hosted with Boy Abunda, Jenni Epperson and JR Isaac. Well, whatever people say, show biz is composed of artists and creative people.

Notwithstanding the bloated egos and diva behavior, these artists have reason to stop dwelling on petty differences and to unite for the common goal of elevating the industry to greater heights.

We still have a long way to go, but this is surely a good way to start.

REIGNING R. Regine Velasquez in Rajo Laurel

IN THE FLESH. Rufa Mae Quinto goes natural

DAISY DIVA. Who can beat Celia Rodriguez?

MEGA woman Liza Ilarde

WHITE KNIGHTS. Piolo Pascual in Inno Sotto with Yul Servo

DARNA IN DARK BLUE. Angel Locsin, please answer our calls

WESTIN'S SWEET SURPRISE. To tickle the stars' discerning palette

TUX DELUXE. Cesar Montano, Albert Martinez and Ricky Davao

PINKINI OPEN. Francine Prieto... because she can

FOXY WHITE. Rajo Laurel made this white tux for me to suit the fifties feel of the FAP ball

JENNI Epperson in Tadshi by Rustan's

AIN'T LIFE GRAND? Mega EIC Carla Sibal and Leo Grand

SUITED UP 24/7. Jay R is the fresh prince of the FAP

MUSICAL AND VISUAL DELIGHT. Geneva Cruz pulsates onstage

SURREAL FIFTIES GLAM. The FAP Luna Awards "Director-General's Ball"

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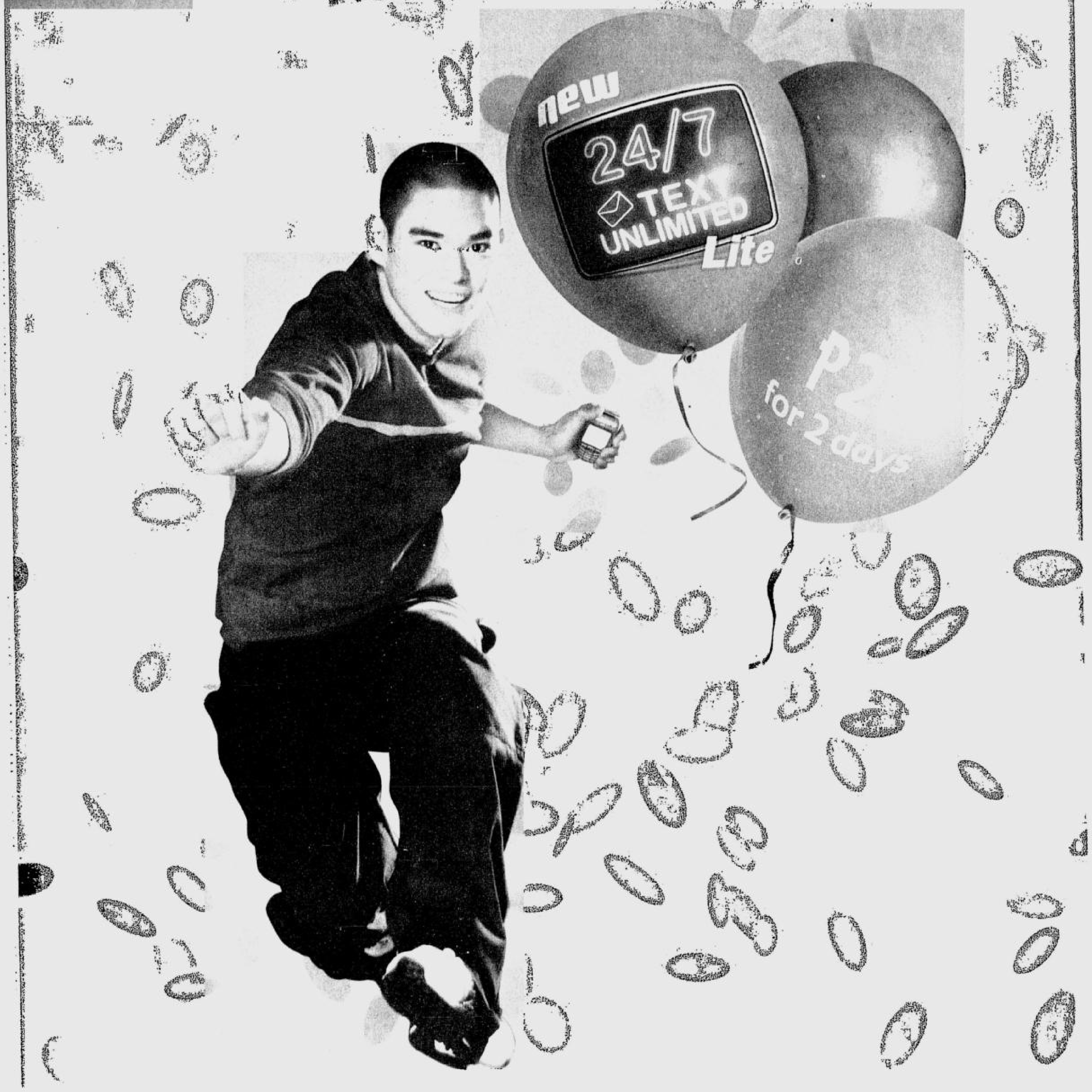

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    OR
  - Dial **220**, press **1** then enter the 14-digit number string.

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